

# JAPANESE ART

*Selections  
from the  
Mary and Jackson  
Burke Collection*

THE  
METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM  
OF ART



JAPANESE ART  
Selections from the  
Mary and Jackson Burke Collection





*"Utsu no Yama," an episode from the Ise Monogatari (The Tales of Ise) by Sōtatsu, no. 52*

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Selections from the  
Mary and Jackson Burke  
Collection

MIYEKO MURASE

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1975

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# Contents

JACKSON BURKE, 1908–1975	vii
FOREWORD	ix
PREFACE	xi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xiii
CATALOGUE	
1 The Classical Tradition in Sacred and Secular Arts	
<i>Sculpture, Painting, and Calligraphy from the Tenth to the Fourteenth Centuries</i>	i
2 The Art of the Monochrome Brush	
<i>Ink Paintings of the Muromachi Period</i>	83
3 The Colors of Affluence	
<i>Momoyama Screens, Rimpa, and Late Yamato-e</i>	143
4 Masters of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries	
<i>Eccentric, Nanga, and Ukiyo-e</i>	205
5 The Aesthetics of Technique	
<i>Ceramics and Lacquerware</i>	313
CHINESE AND JAPANESE NAMES	337
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	345





# Jackson Burke

## 1908 - 1975

Jackson Burke was a printer, collector, naturalist, and craftsman, a man with the sensitive eye of an artist and the high standards of a perfectionist. Born in San Francisco and educated at the University of California at Berkeley, he became well established in the Bay Area after the war as a private printer and designer of books for the Stanford University Press. In 1948 he moved to Brooklyn to join the Mergenthaler Linotype Company as director of typographic development, a position he held until illness forced him into early retirement in 1963. His great achievements in the field of typesetting and photocomposition have remained surprisingly anonymous.

It is no overstatement to say that he designed and produced the text faces of the vast majority of newspapers in this country and set the standards by which phototypography is measured today. In addition he initiated many new book faces, including the American cutting of the Helvetica series, and found time to serve as adviser to the Printing Office of the Yale University Press. This lifelong interest in printing led him to develop one of the outstanding private collections of books on printing and type.

The collection that Mary and Jackson Burke acquired in a period of only about ten years was truly a joint effort, and seldom has there been a couple who worked together so tirelessly and effectively to assemble a large group of important and beautiful works of art. Like all great collectors, they enjoyed the chase and the capture, but Jackson's greatest satisfaction came from showing his wonderful things to others in his own mini-gallery. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to watch the smiles of enjoyment and attentive interest of his friends, including my wife and me, when he explained the meaning of a great screen, a hanging scroll, or a wonderful example of calligraphy.

Jackson made it his business to know about each and every work in his collection, and he willingly shared his knowledge with all who expressed an interest. This wish of his to share the beauties of his collection with others and his desire to expand the knowledge of Japanese art in this country through an ongoing sponsorship of both serious exhibition catalogues and scholarly research have given him a place in the very front rank of American collectors.

He was always extremely modest about his collection, even though it is clearly one of the finest private collections of Japanese art in the United States, or for that matter, in the world, outside of Japan itself. He had no desire for the adulation he could rightfully have claimed for this achievement. All he wanted was to

enjoy his objects in a quiet and peaceful setting, and to enable others to do the same.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is proud to be able to show the full range of Mary and Jackson Burke's treasures to the public for the first time and to publish this catalogue, whose appearance Jackson eagerly anticipated. The joy these works will now bring to thousands is the finest tribute we can pay Jackson, and we can be confident it will be the one that would have pleased him the most.

DOUGLAS DILLON

President

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

# Foreword

With this exhibition The Metropolitan Museum of Art is privileged to present the extensive and remarkable collection of Japanese art formed over the last decade by Mary and Jackson Burke. The Museum's association with Mr. and Mrs. Burke has been a long and rewarding one, going back to 1962 when Mary Burke presented us with a Ming-dynasty Chinese painting. Since then the Burkes have generously donated funds toward the purchase of Japanese art, including the magnificent Aizen Myōō in this exhibition. They have also lent works from their own collection, supported preliminary research on our Japanese paintings, and contributed to the Department of Far Eastern Art in more personal ways.

It was of particular importance to us that Mary and Jackson Burke became members of the Far Eastern Departmental Visiting Committee at its inception in 1969. Their firm commitment to the field and their enthusiastic encouragement of our own efforts have been deeply influential in the present long-awaited flowering of Japanese art at the Metropolitan, culminating this year in our exhibition, first, of the great treasures of the Momoyama period assembled for us by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs, and now of the finest works from the Burke collection. Intimate in its choices, catholic in its worth and appeal to scholars and public, the Burke collection reflects a happy collaboration and connoisseurship, and we, happily, are its beneficiaries.

THOMAS HOVING

Director

The Metropolitan Museum of Art





# Preface

Shortly before he died my husband expressed to me his feeling that it would be wrong not to include in this scholarly catalogue some word of the pleasure the collection had given us. We both found the activity of collecting to be a supremely satisfying one; although we started only in 1963, rather late in our lives, it accounted for some of our happiest moments and shared delights.

As one can see in this catalogue, our collection reflects an interest in many different facets of Japanese art, ranging from early Buddhist objects to late Edo-period paintings. However, there was no orderly progression from ancient to modern in our acquisition program. We actually started with the lively, colorful, and relatively late Ukiyo-e paintings and worked back to the refined objects of Kamakura and Heian times, then forward again to the personal idiom of Nanga-school painting.

In addition to the sustained pleasure of learning to distinguish the real from the fake and the wonderful excitement in the discovery of a masterpiece which sang out to us, we shared other collecting experiences on a more naive and personal level. Because of our strong love of nature, we were both drawn to certain paintings by Buddhist monks of the Muromachi period that expressed the essence of natural things and man's close harmony with them. Together we identified the sites in our Rakuchū-Rakugai screens. We became, in effect, citizens of old Kyoto and wandered together in the streets, participating in the seasonal festivals and admiring the goods in the multitude of shops; at other times we retreated to the mountains with the literati painters to play the *koto* and write poems.

Besides such shared fantasies and interests we each had our special predilections. I pursued my love affair with Prince Genji by acquiring a number of objects that expressed in visual terms the romance and charm of that great literary work, *The Tale of Genji*. Jackson brought to bear his trained printer's eye by putting together a group of scrolls and books distinguished by their beautiful calligraphy. I believe that his rigorous visual training also explains his preference for the simple strong shapes and rough textures of our early storage jars from the five kilns of Shigaraki, Tamba, Iga, Echizen, and Bizen.

While it was I who first became enthusiastic about Japanese art, it was Jackson who gave our collecting its real focus and meaning. He realized that although we derived tremendous satisfaction from our paintings it was clear that the Western atmosphere of our living space was not giving our material the sympathetic surroundings it needed.

We found the answer to our problem in early 1966, when the sculptor Yasu-

hide Kobashi created a Japanese setting for the showing and sharing of our collection. This became our “mini-museum,” a wonderfully versatile space that was by turns temple or tea room, depending on the nature of the objects we chose to show. From 1966 until his death in May 1975, Jackson showed some 250 different selections to more than 1,600 students, friends, and visitors.

Almost all of this material, including the selections catalogued here, was collected with our mini-museum in mind. Scale of our objects and size of our paintings were important to us always, and we carefully considered how each object would look with our other material in the small gallery.

Aware that this might be an oblique approach to collecting, Jackson still felt that the principal value of collecting was the making of material available to students, and others interested, in suitable surroundings. Thus, when we acquired a new piece, we could hardly wait to create the right setting for it in the gallery and call in the viewers. Their delight, and their often sudden recognition of the beauty of an object in this ideal place, amply repaid our efforts.

I believe that it was not only Jackson’s taste but, again, his background in the field of printing and typographic design that gave him his understanding of the importance of the total visual effect—the complete ambiance of an object—and enabled him to plan so many beautiful small “shows.” This gift has died with him, and our mini-museum has served its purpose. Our collection, however, remains. The present exhibition in The Metropolitan Museum of Art comprises a far greater selection of our objects than could ever have been shown at one time in our small gallery, and I am confident that Jackson would have approved of the handsome manner in which these pieces are being presented to the public on this occasion.

MARY BURKE  
Centre Island  
Oyster Bay

# Acknowledgments

It is now almost four years since Mary and Jackson Burke first discussed with me the possibility of preparing a catalogue of selected objects in their collection. At that time they had been collecting in earnest for about ten years. While a decade is not a long time to assemble outstanding works of art, the intensity, seriousness, and selectivity of the Burkes' pursuit, which I was privileged to share with them, enabled them to gather a superlative collection. As the idea of a book crystallized into this catalogue for an exhibition, the three of us spent hours in the task of selecting the objects to be shown and reluctantly excluding the others.

Mary's love of things Japanese set the tone for the entire project, while Jackson's refined aesthetic sensibility and keen eye for details set the standard. From its inception, Jackson brought to the task a perfectionist's meticulous care and a superb sense of design that had made him an expert in his own field of typography. Until a few days before his death, Jackson was in close touch with the planning of the exhibition and the production of this catalogue. It is truly sad that he did not live to see the final result, which bears so much of his personal stamp.

A book of this size and nature is possible only with the cooperation and the assistance of countless people. I was fortunate to have many devoted friends who put their time and effort at my disposal. My deepest gratitude goes first to Mary Burke, whose contribution of encouragement, support, and patience made this catalogue a reality. I am also deeply indebted to the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation for making the work financially feasible.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to several scholars in Japan, who unstintingly provided expertise and advice. Hayashiya Seizō of the Tokyo National Museum examined the ceramics included here, and offered his expert opinions on them. Kuno Takeshi and Yanagisawa Taka of the Research Institute of Tokyo did the same for the Buddhist sculptures and paintings. Above all, Tanaka Ichimatsu of the Cultural Agency in Tokyo generously made himself available to my questions, devoting many hours to studying photographs of all the paintings we intended to include. His rich experience and unrivaled knowledge of painting made my working with him a true learning experience.

Katō Hideyuki of Tokyo University deserves special appreciation for the many hours he spent guiding me through difficult passages in the colophons. Kuang-huan Lu, formerly of St. John's University, helped me to translate the colophons that have strong Chinese overtones. Moreover, I was fortunate to



have the invaluable and uncommon expertise of Cornelius Chang, Columbia University, who helped me to decipher a number of difficult seals.

I am deeply grateful to the members of the Department of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University, who excused me from part of my teaching responsibilities so that I could devote more time to this catalogue. During the last year and a half, when every minute of my time away from the classroom was spent in writing, my graduate students must no doubt have suffered a sense of neglect. I am appreciative of their understanding and indulgence.

The high quality of the photographs and the handsome design of this book are a credit to the objects included in it. The photographers, Marguerite and Otto Nelson, demonstrated unusual patience in the face of my frequent demands on their time and energy. Andrew Pekarik was most helpful in assisting us during photography sessions. I am also grateful for the kind personal attention of Peter Oldenburg, the designer of the book, who spent valuable time in explaining technical aspects to me.

Although the content of the book is entirely my own responsibility, the final form of the text owes its existence to the unflagging generosity of others. Gustina Scaglia of Queens College generously went over the entire manuscript, offering much needed advice and valuable suggestions. Emily Sano also reviewed the manuscript and helped enliven my English style. With Rita Lee, later, she assumed the task of reading the proofs. Ever conscientious and watchful, these two graduate students at Columbia read the galleys for me. Finally, I am truly indebted to my editor, Lauren Shakely of Metropolitan Museum's Editorial Department, not only for her expertise but also for her patience.

A publication of this scope takes an enormous amount of time and effort. As it nears completion, I am terrified at the realization that there is not more time to go over the details once again. Undoubtedly, errors will be found in these pages. They are mine, entirely.

In closing, I should like to express the hope that the spirit with which Mary and Jackson Burke guided the planning of the exhibition and this catalogue may help to deepen the understanding and appreciation of Japanese arts in the United States.

MIYEKO MURASE  
Columbia University

## CATALOGUE

# Chronology

## CHINA

T'ang Dynasty: 618-906

Northern Sung Dynasty: 960-1127

Southern Sung Dynasty: 1127-1279

Yüan Dynasty: 1260-1368

Ming Dynasty: 1368-1644

Ch'ing Dynasty: 1644-1912

## JAPAN

Nara Period: 710-784

Early Heian Period: 784-901

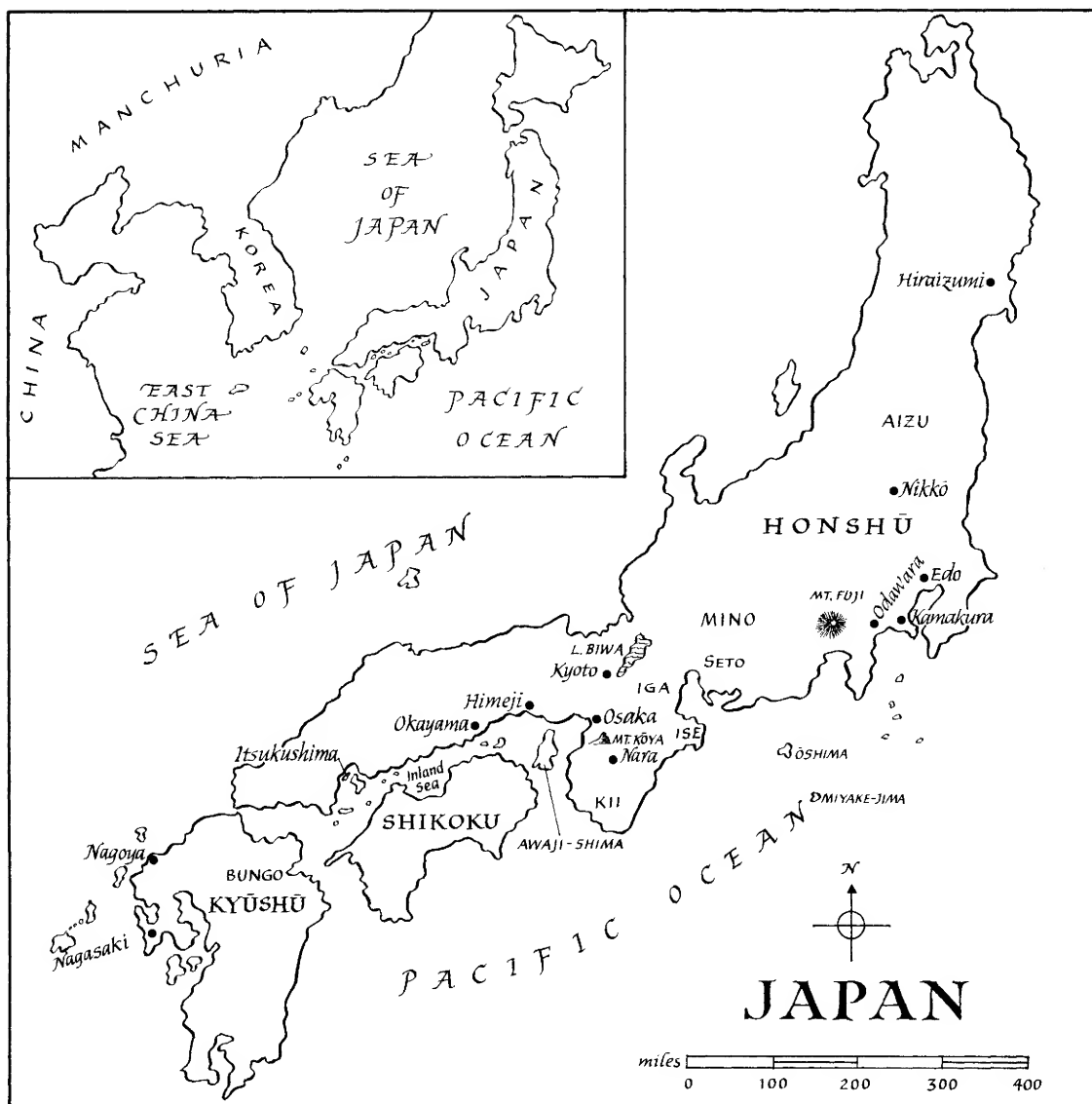
Fujiwara Period: 901-1185

Kamakura Period: 1185-1333

Muromachi Period: 1336-1573

Momoyama Period: 1573-1615

Edo Period: 1615-1867



P A R T 1      The Classical Tradition  
in Sacred and Secular Arts  
*Sculpture, Painting, and Calligraphy  
from the Tenth to the Fourteenth Centuries*





THE FLUCTUATING, rhythmic flow of Japan's cultural history corresponds to her intermittent contacts with peoples beyond her own shores. While the waters of the Japan and China seas protected the ancient island empire from the threat of military incursions, the natural barrier was also, at times, a deterrent to the full transmission of a more advanced civilization from the continent. The new ideas inspired the Japanese to higher goals, but Japan was never totally dominated by a foreign culture. Periods of intense borrowing alternated with those of withdrawal, when the Japanese, content in the comfortable cocoon of their island habitat, assimilated what they learned from abroad and adapted it to their natural environment and their particular sensitivity. In our own times, emerging from an entrenched feudal order in the late nineteenth century, Japan has, with incredible ingenuity, modified the Western technology and culture it enthusiastically embraced to suit its national requirements.

Three waves of continental influence were particularly responsible for shaping the history of art in Japan. The first was the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century; the second, the importation of Zen Buddhism in the thirteenth century, which introduced the concept and technique of ink monochrome painting; and finally, in the Edo period, the rapid assimilation of the literati concept of painting.

The introduction of Buddhism from the Korean kingdom of Paekche in 538 A.D. (or 552 A.D., according to another tradition) and its effects on the country are well known to students of Japanese culture. Not only were the Japanese introduced to a new religious faith, they were awakened to the existence of a higher culture on the continent. The Japanese rushed to acquire all the paraphernalia of a new, civilized life that accompanied Buddhism. All forms of art employed in praise of the new gods were welcomed, and the social order was restructured with a sophisticated system of government, which touched, in some way, every aspect of Japanese life. Perhaps the most significant acquisition was the system of writing used by the Chinese. The Japanese, until then, did not have a written language of their own. For a short while, Paekche and another Korean kingdom called Silla provided mentors and intermediary agents to introduce the superior culture of China to the Japanese, but a direct contact with mainland China was soon established. The city of Nara, built in 710 as the first permanent capital of Japan, was fashioned after a Chinese metropolis, its streets and avenues laid out in a systematic gridiron pattern. The new city, with its many exotic Buddhist structures, inspired some Japanese poets to extol the city as "beautiful in greens and reds," because the multistoried temples were painted in bright colors. The foreign culture differed significantly from the native

Shinto tradition, which provided for no large imperial palaces and discreetly tucked its simple, unadorned shrines deep into mountain refuges. Although Shinto never lost its foothold as the state religion and although it continued to control many traditional observances important to national life, Buddhism became the professed faith of most members of the ruling class. It is generally believed, in fact, that the court's sudden decision to abandon Nara after only three-quarters of a century and to move to a new site was made because the Buddhist church of Nara had become too powerful and too meddlesome in court affairs.

The new capital, Heian-kyō, established in 794 in the area of modern Kyoto, was to remain the nation's capital, although at times in name only, until 1867, when Edo was chosen as the capital of modern Japan and renamed Tokyo. The four-hundred-year period from 794 to 1185, when control of the government was taken over by military generals, is usually divided into the Early and Late Heian periods. The Early Heian period covers one hundred years from 794 through the ninth century. During the Late Heian period the government was controlled by an all-powerful family of noblemen, the Fujiwara. "Fujiwara period" will be used here to designate the two hundred fifty years from the tenth century to 1185.

In the Early Heian period, large-scale temple construction was not undertaken within the capital. Its "guardian" temples, Saiji (Western Temple) and Tōji (Eastern Temple), were built on the city's southern boundary. The court's decrees that no other temples were to be built within the city limits demonstrated its determination to remain free of church influence. Some church leaders also expressed a desire for the separation of church and state: Saichō (also known as Dengyō Daishi, 767–822) and Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi, 773–835), two religious reformers of the time, were both wary of the kind of corruption that had caused the downfall of the church in Nara. Even before the court moved to Kyoto, these men had established quarters for their sects deep in the mountains, away from the influence of the Nara church.

Esoteric Buddhism (Mikkyō), especially Kūkai's Shingon sect, became the dominant religious force of the period. With its exotic-looking deities and mysterious rites, Mikkyō, the most occult of all the Buddhist sects, appealed particularly to the ruling class. Mikkyō originated in India, where many Hindu deities were incorporated into the originally small Buddhist pantheon, and its icons endowed with the extra heads, eyes, and limbs familiar to the Hindu concept of supernatural gods (nos. 7, 16). The Mikkyō doctrinal system considered the whole universe to be a manifestation of energies emanating from its central divinity, Dainichi (Mahāvairocana), who is supposed to be present everywhere, in every thing, thought, act, and word. All other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were viewed as part of this supreme god. The strict liturgy of Mikkyō was conducted in small, semidark halls and involved the burning of wood on which magical

spells and formulae (mantra) were inscribed. Such elaborate rituals proved very popular.

Mikkyō's pantheistic view of the universe was especially significant. It was broad enough to include Shinto gods in its pantheon and so provided a theoretical basis for the efforts to reconcile native gods with "foreign" Buddhist deities. The theory, known in Japanese as Honchi Suijaku (Suijaku, for short), or Shimbutsu Shūgō, provided Shinto gods with Buddhist identities. Although it was the only religion in Japan until the arrival of Buddhism, Shintoism did not have sacred books, a founder, or a well-defined pantheon. Polytheistic Shintoism saw nature as the manifestation of a god's presence; for example, high places were thought to be sanctified by the presence of mountain deities. Since the mountainbound temples of the Early Heian period occupied land that was the domain of a native Shinto god, the reconciliation and peaceful coexistence of Buddhism and Shinto through Mikkyō was mutually beneficial to both religions.

Also unknown to Shintoism were anthropomorphic representations of gods, although sacred objects such as mirrors, swords, and jewels were symbolically associated with them. The amalgamation of the two religions provided Shinto with a precedent for the visual representation of its own gods. Although literary records suggest the existence of Shinto sculpture as early as the mid-eighth century, there is no Shinto image dated before the Early Heian period. Moreover, since Shinto lacked a tradition for icons, the first examples were based on the technique and style of Buddhist images. Even after they accepted the idea of visual representation of their own gods, Shintoists never allowed public viewing or worship of their images. Shinto images are, even today, jealousy guarded and kept out of sight of visitors, making it difficult for serious scholars to undertake a thorough investigation.

The court's attempt in the late eighth century to extricate itself from the influence of Nara temples and the cessation of its generous support to Buddhist temples had a far-reaching effect on Buddhist arts. The withdrawal of official patronage led to the abolition of many artists' workshops, which were numerous and large as long as they were associated with major Nara temples. Records of the period refer to the artists from the provinces who had been conscripted to serve at the temple workshops and were being released to return home, or who were becoming itinerant artists and were seeking temporary employment with provincial temples.<sup>1</sup> The metropolitan style of Nara thus spread to many different parts of the country—as far as the northern provinces and to remote parts of Shikoku Island in the south. The religious enthusiasm of these itinerant monk-artists is transmitted strongly and directly in their work. Sometimes their images defied the classical canons of sculpture, appearing naive, but they were charged, nevertheless, with an emotional intensity unknown in the work of earlier periods. Vigorous provincial works continued through the tenth century, until

they were gradually replaced by a strong metropolitan style that emerged in Kyoto. In the meantime, good wood, always available in abundance, especially around mountain sanctuaries, became the most important material for sculpture. It replaced the costly bronze figures of the Asuka period, the easily modeled but fragile clay statues, and the durable but time-consuming hollow dry-lacquer pieces of the Nara period. In fact, except for a few revivalist works in bronze made several centuries later during the Kamakura period, wood remained the major material for Buddhist and Shinto sculptures throughout the history of their production.<sup>2</sup>

The Fujiwara period represents one of the high points in the history of Japan, when the Japanese succeeded in assimilating and modifying Chinese culture to suit their own sensibilities. The Fujiwara clan emerged as the supreme power at court after the death in exile of their only significant rival, Sugawara Michizane (about 840–903), whose tragic life is illustrated in the *Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki* (no. 22). The all-powerful Fujiwara nobles and a small aristocratic coterie devoted their lives to pleasure and beauty and controlled not only the affairs of state, but all aesthetic matters. Sensitivity and courtly sophistication, if slightly effeminate and lacking in vigor, permeated all of the arts, the nobility's outlook on life, and even their religious faith.

The Fujiwara's legendary commitment to the arts and to a life of frivolous pleasures is best understood from the great romantic novel of the early eleventh century by Murasaki Shikibu (Lady Murasaki), the *Genji Monogatari* (*Tale of Genji*). A part of this novel is said to be modeled on the life of Fujiwara Michinaga (966–1027), patriarch of the clan and perhaps the greatest spendthrift Japan has ever known. The Fujiwara's attitude toward religious matters is vividly illustrated in their commitment to the cult of Amida Buddha and the hope of entry into his most blissful "Western Paradise." The Amidist sects, which can claim, even today, more members than any other religious body in Japan, promised the easiest possible road to salvation through the practice of *nembutsu* ("calling on Buddha's name"). Salvation without arduous spiritual exercises was most congenial to the Japanese temperament, appealing to rich and poor alike. The beatific vision of Amida's paradise, described in the Amida sutras and in priest Genshin's book, the *Ōjō Yōshū* (*Essentials of Salvation*)<sup>3</sup> greatly affected the lives of nobles. As a tangible manifestation of his faith in Amida Buddha, Michinaga dedicated Hōjōji to the glory of Amida in 1022.

Hōjōji was the most beautiful and luxurious religious monument of its time, a vivid demonstration of the political and economic power of the Fujiwaras. Above all, the temple was a manifestation of the Fujiwara aesthetic vision, where all the arts—landscape design, architecture, sculpture, painting, and crafts—were treated equally as a great ensemble. Praised as "Amida's paradise on earth," Hōjōji was unfortunately razed by fire in 1058, but its sumptuous beauty as well as Michinaga's death inside the Amida Hall in 1027, while holding a strand

of five-colored silken cords attached to the hands of the Amida statue, are vividly described in the *Eiga Monogatari*.<sup>4</sup> Although now reduced from its original scale, the celebrated Byōdō-in at Uji, a suburb southeast of Kyoto, echoes Michinaga's glorious monument. The Amida Hall, the Hōōdō (Phoenix Hall), dedicated in 1053 by Michinaga's son, Yorimichi, is also an ensemble of the arts, each work executed under the supervision of the great master of each craft. These two great temples, the Hōjōji and Byōdō-in, set the standard for many similar projects in remote provinces, such as Chūsonji, located in the north at Hiraizumi, and Fukkiji, in the southern island of Kyūshū.

The sculptures of the Fujiwara period reflect a unified style developed in the eleventh century by artists of the metropolitan workshops in Kyoto. The statue of Amida by the sculptor Jōchō (d. 1057) at Hōōdō epitomizes the ultrarefinement and sophistication of Fujiwara aesthetics. It also became the model for all other Amida statues for the next century, including those from the provinces. Jōchō is also credited with the perfection of a sculptural technique called *yosegi-zukuri* ("assembling blocks"). Most likely Japanese sculptors learned this technique of making a statue by joining wood blocks from Chinese imports like the standing Tobatsu Bishamonten of Tōji. In the *yosegi-zukuri* technique, statues were "built" with small blocks of wood, carved to shape the exterior and to hollow the interior, then joined together to form the final shape. The technique was ideal for preserving wood statues against deterioration caused by climatic changes, for reducing the weight of statues for easier handling, and for expediting the production of sculptures, since many artists could work as a team, each on a different section.

The most significant cultural development of the Fujiwara period was the invention of the *kana* script, which abbreviates select Chinese characters to represent separate syllables of Japanese words. *Kana* is an easy and practical syllabary that enabled the Japanese to record their everyday speech. Although it was inadequate for serious business and Chinese was retained as the language of government papers, laws, and other documents of an official nature for centuries, *kana* provided a freedom of expression that affected many aspects of national life. Moreover, the *kana* script had a significant role in subsequent artistic developments, especially literature, calligraphy, and painting. For the first time Japanese poets and novelists were able to produce a vernacular literature. Without the benefit of *kana*, native verse (*waka*), elegant calligraphic works, and above all, great novels like the *Genji Monogatari* would not have been possible.

Closely related to the development of *kana* and the indigenous literature at this time was the birth of *yamato-e*. "Yamato" is the name for the region of southwestern Honshū, which was the political and cultural center of ancient Japan, encompassing the cities of Kyoto, Nara, and Osaka. The word "yamato" thus stands for "Japan," and *yamato-e* means "Japanese painting." However,

the Japanese of the Fujiwara period often used this word as an antithesis of *kara-e* (literally, “T’ang painting,” hence, “Chinese painting”), suggesting their awareness of a distinction between the two. Although documentary evidence for the use of the word *yamato-e* is found only after 999,<sup>5</sup> its origin may be traced to almost two hundred years earlier. At the beginning of the ninth century, a screen at the Imperial Palace showed on one side a painting of a famous scene from the *Shan-hai Chin*, a Chinese book of geography, and on the reverse side a scene of the Uji River, one of the favorite scenic spots southeast of Kyoto (see no. 46). This screen was clearly an attempt to decorate the palace interior with paintings that contrasted native scenery with scenes of foreign lands. In this manner, a conscious effort was gradually made to distinguish two types of paintings, both in terms of their subjects and styles. *Yamato-e* was used to depict native scenes and native stories; *kara-e* was used for scenery and human figures of China. In fact, by the time of Lady Murasaki, the distinction between the two types was clear enough to attempt an evaluation of their relative merits. Discussing *yamato-e*, she summarizes in her *Genji Monogatari*:

... but ordinary hills and rivers, just as they are, houses such as you may see anywhere, with all their real beauty and harmony of form—quietly to draw such scenes as this, or to show what lies behind some intimate hedge that is folded away far from the world, and thick trees upon some unheroic hills, and all this with befitting care for composition, proportion, and the like—such works demand the highest master’s utmost skill. . . .<sup>6</sup>

The term *yamato-e* can, therefore, be used to describe either a landscape or a narrative painting, so long as it is a secular painting depicting Japanese scenery or a Japanese story and is executed in a style that is distinctly different from the *kara-e* style. However, we do not know how the ancient Japanese determined stylistic differences between *yamato-e* and *kara-e*. Few examples of *yamato-e* prior to the mid-twelfth century have survived. Their existence is known primarily through literary references, which are never explicit about stylistic features.<sup>7</sup> Documentary materials about now-lost paintings, however, demonstrate that the inhabitants of Kyoto were deeply moved by the subtle seasonal changes that regulated their lives and colored the hills and mountains surrounding Kyoto.<sup>8</sup> Two types of *yamato-e* landscapes emerge as distinct themes in literary references: *meisho-e*, pictures of famous scenic spots, and *tsukinami-e*, pictures of the four seasons and activities of the twelve months. Both types also depicted human activities and were, therefore, genre paintings that emphasized the beauty of background scenery. Painted on screens, in codex form, on handscrolls, or on folding fans, these *meisho-e* and *tsukinami-e* laid the foundation for a distinctly Japanese type of landscape painting, which was to survive even when Chinese influences dominated the arts during the Muromachi period. They also laid the foundation for later genre painting. The *Rakuchū-Rakugai*

screens represent its most comprehensive form (see no. 45), and some works by Ukiyo-e painters in the Edo period also continue the ancient tradition (see no. 89).

A preference for narrative paintings clearly distinguishes the Japanese genius from the Chinese. To be sure, the Chinese also excelled in figure painting, but theirs were often tinged with didactic overtones, while the Japanese delighted in pure narration, both sacred and secular. It is not known exactly when native literature was first illustrated with painting, but a reference to a work of illustrated fiction appeared in 907, when an empress dowager was presented with a picture depicting the tragic life of a girl.<sup>9</sup> By the mid-twelfth century, a superb art of illustrating literature in handscrolls had evolved. Using the continuing surface, Japanese painters illustrated their stories with an ingenuity and a freshness of vision not equaled in China's pictorial art. The narrative picture scroll, the *emaki* or *emaki-mono*, was not the only format used for illustrating narrative scenes, although it was by far the most satisfactory. Before the twelfth century large screens, both folding and sliding types, seem to have been the most popular format for narrative scenes. The codex form was also used, often with text and pictures in separate volumes. In a scene from the "Azumaya" chapter of the celebrated twelfth-century *Genji* scroll belonging to the Tokugawa Museum in Nagoya, a princess is shown enjoying a book of pictures, while a lady-in-waiting reads to her mistress from a volume of text.

Unfortunately, secular paintings had even less chance of survival than religious icons, and only a few *emaki* are extant. Even those that have survived are seldom preserved in their original condition. As a result of commercial greed, long scrolls have been divided into small sections and scattered among different collections. All the *emaki* included here are fragments from scrolls that were once much larger (see nos. 20–24). Regrettably, the fragmentation of *emaki* was also encouraged by an aesthetic concept propagated by the cult of tea. In a small, intimate tea ceremony, tiny *emaki* fragments were appreciated for their unique beauty and precisely for their imperfect condition—a peculiar aesthetic premise that will be discussed in detail in Part 2.

In many respects, two civil wars of the mid-twelfth century, the insurrections of the Hōgen and Heiji eras, signify a turning point in the history of Japan (see no. 23). As a result of the two wars, the political supremacy of the Fujiwara nobles was finally replaced by that of stalwart warriors, first, briefly by the Taira (also known as Heike); and later by the Minamoto clan (Genji). The subsequent historical epoch, the Kamakura period, began in 1185 with the establishment of the Minamoto regime in Kamakura by the clan leader, Yoritomo. It was the first of a continuous succession of Bakufu, or military governments, which were to rule the nation until 1867. The Minamoto warriors, who had nurtured their strength in the eastern provinces, maintained their simple, direct, earthy values. Because the militarily trained and armed monks of Kōfukuji and Tōdaiji



in Nara sided with the Genji army, these two temples were set afire in 1180 by retreating Taira forces. Even before the restoration of peace, Yoritomo had given generous support to projects of rebuilding these temples, begun under the energetic supervision of the monk, Chōgen (d. 1206). The most dynamic artistic talents were mobilized for the reconstruction project, and, for awhile, the city of Nara led the artistic movement of the country.

Since buildings and many sculptures were to be replaced, the recipients of this commission became in effect the leaders of the nation's sculptors. The Kyoto school, who were descendents of Jōchō, worked with their branch family in Nara for awhile, but after the death of their aging leader, the project was continued by the Nara sculptors alone. This school was under the direction of two young, dynamic artists, Unkei (d. 1223) and his slightly older colleague, Kaikei (active, 1183–1236) (see no. 7). The ancestors of the Kei school, as these two masters and their associates are known, had branched out of Jōchō's Kyoto group in the late eleventh century and settled in Nara, working mainly on repairs and restorations of statues in Nara temples. Kei school training, therefore, had been based on an older tradition of sculpture, particularly that of the Nara period. Although one Kyoto critic called their work "uncouth,"<sup>10</sup> the dominance of the Kei school in the early Kamakura reconstruction projects led to a revival of Nara-period aesthetic ideals.

This renaissance was not limited to the Kei school of sculptors or to the art of sculpture alone. Religious movements experienced a similar rediscovery of the past glory of the Nara period as a time of national unity and strength, which in turn affected the type of art produced. The Great Buddha of Kamakura, a colossus cast in bronze, is typical of sculpture created during the revival movement. The worship of Shaka, the historical Buddha, also returned to fashion, and a sudden rise in popularity of the biography of Shaka, the *Kako Genzai Inga Kyō* (*Sutra of Cause and Effect*), is another aspect of this vogue (see no. 12).

The Minamotos and their regents, the Hōjōs, steadfastly shunned the influence of the cultured, effete Kyoto society. Military patrons preferred an energetic, strong, and realistic portrayal of subjects in the arts, rather than richness and the subtle evocation of beauty favored by Fujiwara aesthetics. The Kamakura period saw an unprecedented popularity of realistic portraiture, both in sculpture and painting, and these works, which often display the sitter's unattractive physical features, bring us face to face, for the first time, with the appearances of the men who shaped the course of the nation. Odious aspects of life and society, too, were frankly portrayed. The Ippen scrolls focus on wretched social outcasts. For straying believers, the scrolls of *Hells* and *Diseases*, which depict real and imaginary sufferings of mankind, were more persuasive than pictures of genteel happiness in Buddhist paradises.

Many innovative works in Buddhist sculpture of the Kamakura period portray minor gods rather than Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Sculptors regarded lesser

gods, such as guardians, as an opportunity to depict more complex bodily movements. Technical refinements, such as the inlaying of eyes with crystal and other materials, also helped to create convincingly “lifelike” gods. This bolder approach had the advantage of freeing Buddhist statues, for the first time in the history of Japanese sculpture, from strict frontal positions, which were corollary to their functions as devotional objects. Statues now appeared in true three-dimensional space. A vivid manifestation of the trend toward realism was the popular practice of dressing statues with real clothing. Unfortunately, however, this extreme degree of realism reduced icons to the level of popular idols, sometimes even to the point of banality, and it marks the decline of Buddhist sculpture in Japan. Since sculpture was rarely used to represent secular subjects in the Far East, the decline of religious sculpture meant the fall of this art. The trend was further accelerated in the Kamakura period by the rise of Zen Buddhism, which used far fewer sculptured icons than did traditional temples.

Zen adherents, who had been gathering force since the beginning of the thirteenth century, received unexpected allies among Chinese refugees who fled China after the takeover of the Sung court in 1260 by the Yüan Mongols. Some of the refugees were Chinese Ch’an (Zen) prelates, especially monks from south China, who accepted Japan’s warm welcome to settle and proselytize their contemplative sect of Buddhism. These Chinese immigrants included the famous Lan-ch’i Tao-lung (1213–1278, known in Japan as Rankei Dōryū), Wu-hsüeh Ts’u-yüan (1226–1286, Mugaku Sogen), and I-shan I-ning (1247–1317, Issan Ichinei), and many others. The Kamakura Bakufu even helped them to establish two important Zen edifices in Kamakura; Kenchōji was started by Lan-ch’i Tao-lung in 1253, and Enkakuji by Wu-hsüeh Ts’u-yüan in 1282. These Ch’an prelates were educated men of letters in the classic tradition of China, and they helped introduce the Japanese to an appreciation for Chinese calligraphy and ink monochrome painting. Once again, through the vehicle of religion, Chinese literature, calligraphy, and painting stimulated the educated élite of Japan with new goals and fresh aspiration.

1. Kuno Takeshi, “Sculpture Produced after the Great Buddha: Some Observations on Early Heian Sculpture,” *Bijutsu Shi* 26 (October 1957), pp. 46–49.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 35–58.
3. Philip Yampolsky, “Essentials of Salvation: A Translation of the First Two Divisions of Ōjō Yōshū by Genshin” (M. A. Thesis, Columbia University, 1948).
4. The description of his death at Hōjōji is in the chapter “Tsuru no Hayashi” of the *Eiga Monogatari*.
5. Akiyama Terukazu, *Heian Jidai Sezoku-ga no Kenkyū* (*Secular Painting in Early Mediaeval Japan*) (Tokyo, 1964), p. 31.

6. Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York, 1960), p. 27.
7. Ienaga Saburō, *Jōdai Yamato-e Nempyō*, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 1966).
8. Akiyama, *Heian Jidai*, pp. 1–65; Alexander C. Soper, “The Rise of Yamato-e,” *Art Bulletin* XXIV/4 (December 1942), pp. 351–379; Kenji Toda, “Japanese Screen Paintings of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries,” *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959), pp. 153–161.
9. Ienaga, *Jōdai Yamato-e*, p. 34, no. 199.
10. This remark is found in the entry for the twenty-ninth day, ninth month, third year of the Hōgen era, in Zōho Shiryō Taisei Kankō-kai, ed., *Sankai Ki*, Zōho Shiryō Taisei, vol. XXVI (Kyoto, 1965), p. 83.

# I

## Bonten (Brahmā)?

Fujiwara period (second half of the tenth century)

Cypress wood

H. 175.5 cm (69 1/8 in.)

Weather and insects have severely damaged this statue. The entire right arm and the left forearm, the tips of the feet, and the lotus pedestal are lost. Yet, the tall, majestic figure stands solidly in dignified tranquility. The long hair is tied in a tall knot with a band, and a strand of hair crosses over one ear forming a loose loop. The small, full face has suffered particularly heavy destruction: the eyelids and eyebrows are no longer discernible, and the once clearly defined nose-ridge is marred. Fortunately, the cheeks, chin, and full lips still preserve their original softness and plasticity. The figure is dressed in a long-sleeved, belted, flowing gown, its low neckline ornamented with a narrow scalloped frill. Under this coat, the armor has a narrow collar with a dainty ribbon. This type of clothing—a long-sleeved gown over armor—is usually associated with two Buddhist guardians: Bonten and Taishakuten.

The suffix “ten” of the names is a Japanese word for the generic term “Devas,” who were Hindu gods before they were incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon as guardians against Buddha’s adversaries. In Vedic India, Bonten (Brahmā) was the supreme creator of the universe and the Lord of Heaven. He is usually paired with Taishakuten (Indra), god of the atmosphere and thunder, who is relegated to an inferior position in the hierarchy. Once they were assimilated into the Buddhist cosmology, they became part of the twelve guardian deities (Jūniten), who are associated with elements of nature and the cardinal directions of the universe.

When they are represented in the Esoteric Buddhist pantheon (Mikkyō, in Japanese), Bonten and Taishakuten can be easily recognized from their specific at-





tributes. Taishakuten often rides on a white elephant, his attribute from the pre-Buddhist period, while Bonten may ride on a goose or geese. Both guardians are endowed with a third eye and extra hands for other attributes. No specific attributes were provided for Bonten and Taishakuten outside Mikkyō theology. For some unspecified reason, they were represented in the peculiar attire of armor and courtly robes at their earliest appearance in Japan; when they are shown together, sometimes only one of them wears armor under the flowing robe. Distinctions between representations of the two deities have always been nebulous, and their identifications are often challenged. This statue belongs to this vague iconographic tradition of Bonten and Taishakuten, and its exact identity cannot now be determined.

The massive, solid statue was carved out of a large piece of wood in the *ichiboku* ("single-block") technique, except for the arms, feet, and the lotus pedestal, all of which have been lost. The inherent form, mass, and weight of the original material of wood is respected and preserved in this sculpture. Essential details are delineated in the simplest possible manner, without unnecessary elaboration. Simplicity and dignity mark this work, which is typical in many ways of tenth-century sculpture in wood. Various scholars have indicated the difficulty in determining the original condition of many wood sculptures of this period.<sup>1</sup> Some wood

statues that were originally decorated in colors lost all their pigments, while some works that were originally unpainted appear to have received a colorful finish in later periods. This statue has slight traces of colors on the back of the shawl, which may be original.

Such celebrated wood statues as the standing Yakushi Buddha, carved around 800, at Jingoji, Kyoto, and similar works from the ninth century are oppressively massive, and their facial expressions are forbidding and frightening. The present "Bonten" is an example from the transitional period between the powerful, imposing style of the ninth century and the gentle, more sophisticated mid-eleventh-century Fujiwara style works in wood: the head is quite small in proportion to the tall body; the body is flat; the terrifying effect of ninth-century faces is absent; the upper eyelids are heavy and the eyes are downcast, creating a benign, almost sleepy countenance. The folds of the long, soft robe are delineated simply by a few lines in concentric curves. The *homba* (rolling-wave) treatment of the robe, in which rounded folds alternate with sharp-edged folds, is reduced to the minimum and exposes the smooth, unhindered surface of the thighs. The way in which the statue is carved from a single block of wood, with solid interior but with separate lotus pedestal, unlike many of the early tenth-century statues, points to the style perfected almost a century later in the mid-eleventh century by the great master sculptor Jōchō.

1. Kuno Takeshi, "The Stylistic Development of Buddha Statues in the Early Heian Period," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 283 (September 1972), pp. 94–104.

## Tobatsu Bishamonten

Fujiwara period (first half of the eleventh century)

Polychromed *keyaki* wood (*Zelkova serrata*)

H. 125 cm (49¼ in.)

EX COLLECTIONS: Howard C. Hollis, New York;  
Haramoto Torao, Tokyo

PUBLISHED: John Rosenfield, *Japanese Arts of the Heian Period: 794-1185* (New York, 1967), no. 3; Junkichi Mayuyama, ed., *Japanese Art in the West* (Tokyo, 1966), no. 18; Ikawa Kazuko, "Statues of Bishamonten Supported by Jiten: Research on the So-called Tobatsu Bishamonten," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 229 (July 1963), figs. 12-14.



The so-called "Tobatsu" Bishamonten is the Japanese name for a special derivative of the guardian god of the North, Vaishravana, or Bishamonten (also known as Tamonten; no. 8), as he is known in Japan. His function and attributes are identical to those of Bishamonten: he protects the direction of the North; he is dressed in armor as a military general; he holds a weapon and a miniature stupa (a Buddhist memorial shrine), the characteristic mark of Bishamonten. There are, however, several features that distinguish the "Tobatsu" type of Bishamonten from the ordinary Bishamonten: "Tobatsu" is always represented as an independent deity, unlike Bishamonten, who is usually included in a group of the Shiten'nō (Lokapālas, in Sanskrit), the guardians of the four quarters of the universe. Another distinctive feature is the small earth goddess, Jiten (Prthivi, in Sanskrit) that usually supports the "Tobatsu" figure. The presence of this goddess seems to be the only consistent feature of the representations of this deity identified as "Tobatsu" Bishamonten, so that a new name of "Bishamonten supported by Jiten" was proposed recently as the more suitable and correct name for this deity.<sup>1</sup> A number of Japanese scholars have extensively researched Chinese and Indian sources for the origin of this Japanese word "Tobatsu," but so far the work has been in vain.<sup>2</sup> In the Early Heian period, the Japanese people believed that the name was introduced from

China, but as early as the twelfth century, its origin seems to have been forgotten. The author of the *Asaba Shō*, a collection of drawings for iconographic studies, reported that no explanation for this strange name could be found.<sup>3</sup> Since then, unfortunately, no one has discovered any Chinese literature referring to it. Difficulty in properly defining the nature of “Tobatsu” is aggravated by the fact that the name is not found in inscriptions accompanying Chinese pictorial representations of Bishamonten supported by the earth goddess. Inscriptions refer to them simply as “Bishamonten,” with no suggestion of a special category.

Although the name “Tobatsu” is never mentioned, several Central Asian tales associated with Bishamonten help to identify the source of some of the iconographic peculiarities distinguishing “Tobatsu.” One legend, which can be traced back to the folklore of Khotan in Central Asia, is recorded in the celebrated monk Hsüang-tsang’s travelogue, the *Hsi-yu Chi* (*Buddhist Records of the Western World*).<sup>4</sup> This story, which echoes the goddess Athena’s birth in Greek mythology, has it that when a king in the desert area of Khotan prayed to the statue of the local protector, Bishamonten, that he might become the father of a child, an infant boy sprang from the idol’s forehead. In order to nurse the newborn, Bishamonten made the earth in front of him well up in the form of a mother’s breast, from which the child drank eagerly. One of the major scriptural sources for Bishamonten, which was translated by an Indian, Amoghavajra (705–774, known in Japanese as Fukū) refers to another fantastic tale which also suggests Bishamonten’s association with Central Asia.<sup>5</sup> According to this story, Bishamonten appeared on the north city gate of Kutch when it was surrounded in 742 by enemy forces. At Bishamonten’s command, golden mice suddenly emerged and chewed off the bowstrings of the enemy soldiers, completely disabling them. This Central Asian legend must have been familiar to the Japanese, since the oldest statue of “Tobatsu” Bishamonten in Japan, a Chinese import dating to the early tenth century, is associated with an identical story. It is reported in the *Tōhō Ki*, a history of the Kyoto temple Tōji.<sup>6</sup> According to this book,

which was written by the monk Gōhō (1306–1362), the statue of “Tobatsu” at Tōji was originally the guardian deity of the capital city of Kyoto, and it stood at Rashō-mon, the city’s most important gate at its southern boundary until it was destroyed. Both the “Tobatsu” and the ordinary Bishamonten are guardians of the North, which in India and the Far East is traditionally considered to be the source of evil forces. The discrepancy in locating the original “Tobatsu” of Tōji at the southern gate was probably intentional, since the Rashō-mon was the most important gate of the capital, and “Tobatsu” was the mightiest of the guardian kings.

Another feature that might reflect a foreign influence on “Tobatsu” is the fact that many “Tobatsu” Bishamonten of China and Japan wear tall, tubular crowns decorated with the design of a phoenix or other bird. This particular attribute is not mentioned in any scriptural sources, except for the twelfth-century collection of iconographic drawings, the *Asaba Shō*. Matsumoto Eiichi traces its origin to Sassanian Persia.<sup>7</sup>

“Tobatsu” Bishamonten at Tōji is dressed in a Central Asian type of armor: a long, tight-fitting coat of chain mail with narrow sleeves. In the past, this armor was regarded as the only mark of distinction separating “Tobatsu” Bishamon from other Bishamonten images. While this seems to hold true for the early representations of this deity in China and Japan, later depictions are not necessarily restricted to this type of armor. Types of Far Eastern armors, sometimes with flowing sleeves, coexist with Central Asian types throughout the representations of “Tobatsu” Bishamonten.<sup>8</sup> The same Far Eastern type of costume is worn by many other guardian deities in Japan, and obviously it cannot be used as a criterion in distinguishing “Tobatsu” from Bishamonten, or any other guardian king. Since his costume and attributes are identical to other representations of Bishamonten, the only distinguishing feature of “Tobatsu” is the earth goddess, Jiten, who supports the guardian god. Jiten is usually, but not always, flanked by two squirming dwarf-demons—Niramba and Biramba—who are also the conventional vehicles supporting all Shiten’nō.

This “Tobatsu” Bishamonten stands motionless over



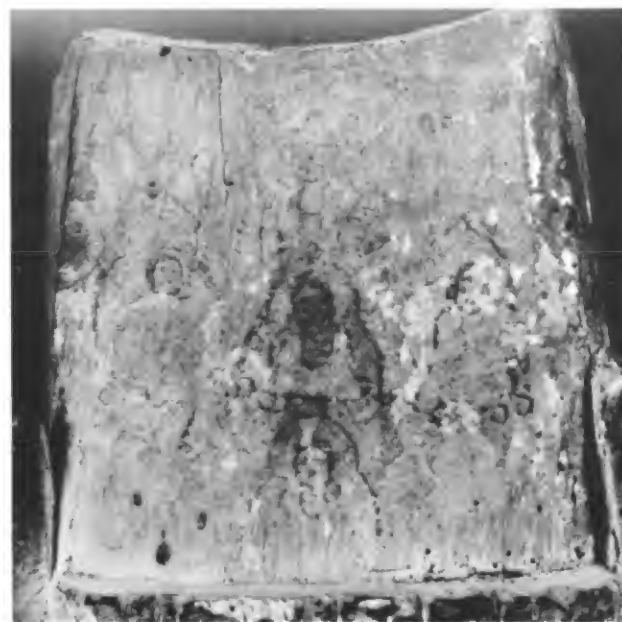


the triad of Jiten and two earth demons. The face is turned slightly downward in a quietly threatening expression, the large, bulging eyes glare down, the brows are slightly knitted in a frown, the lips tightly pursed. The small, full torso with bulging midriff is tightly cloaked in a Chinese type of armor, which was originally decorated with bold color patterns. This rather small guardian and his three vehicles are carved from a single block of wood in the *ichiboku* technique, except for the guardian's arms. The right arm is raised high, and it must originally have held a weapon, probably a small *vajra* ("lightning bolt"), with which to ward off evil forces. When the statue was published in 1963 and 1966,<sup>9</sup> it had a modern right forearm, which has since been discarded. The left arm from the shoulder is a recent replacement. Both arms must have been turned forward, the left arm held much closer to the torso, and not as they presently appear, held laterally so that they completely expose the chest. On the front and left sides of the tall crown are faint traces of ink drawings, now badly worn but revealed by infrared photography. On the front are five small figures of seated Buddhas, a feature that is unique to this statue. A group of five Buddhas as a set is not unusual in Mikkyō iconography, but "Tobatsu" is not necessarily connected with Mikkyō, and the real meaning of their presence here is not understood. On the left side of the crown is a faint trace of the figure of a small child dressed in a courtly costume. Examples of the Central Asian and Chinese "Tobatsu" are often accompanied by a small child, in reference to the Khotanese birth myth. Although rare in Japanese representations of "Tobatsu," this child probably echoes the ancient legend of Khotan.

The plump, childlike earth goddess has her hair arranged in a tall chignon, and the low neckline of her dress is unusual. The full, moon-shaped face with delicate features anticipates those of young women in twelfth-century *emaki*, like the celebrated *Genji* scrolls. The half-naked dwarf demons, who cross their arms in devout obeisance, are carved in a simple, blunt

manner, which has left rough chisel marks on their upward-flowing hair and backs. The statue was dated by Ikawa Kazuko to the first half of the eleventh century.<sup>10</sup> The sophisticated taste of the metropolitan court culture is reflected in the tightly formed body of the deity. The usual display of power and flamboyant movement is suppressed here in favor of an evocation of quiet energy. The round, childlike face of Jiten also reflects the taste of the Fujiwara court. On the other hand, the direct and simple execution of the humorous earth demons suggests that the provenance of this work may be found outside the orbit of metropolitan workshops. The sculpture might have been made in north Japan, where the hard, dense *keyaki* wood (*Zelkova serrata*) was a particularly favorite material for sculpture.

1. Tanaka Shigehisa, "The Origin of Jiten Bishamon Wearing a Bird-shaped Crown," *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 63 (December 1966), pp. 92–110.
2. Matsumoto Bunsaburō, *Bukkyō Shi Zakkō* (Osaka, 1942), pp. 273 ff.; Matsumoto Eiichi, *Tonkō-ga no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1937), pp. 417 ff.; Minamoto Toyomune, "The Origin of Tobatsu Vaisravana," *Bukkyō Bijutsu* 15 (January 1930), pp. 40–55.
3. Ono Gem'myō, ed., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Zuzō* (Tokyo, 1932), vol. IX, p. 418.
4. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–32), vol. LI, no. 2087, p. 943; Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland, 1959), p. 240; Samuel Beal, trans., *Si-yu-ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World*, rev. ed. (Calcutta, 1958).
5. Takakusu and Watanabe, *Daizōkyō*, vol. XXI, no. 1249, p. 228.
6. Ichishima Kenkichi, ed., *Zoku Zoku Gunsho Ruijū*, vol. XII (Tokyo, 1907), p. 21.
7. Matsumoto Eiichi, *Tonkō-ga*, pp. 434–437.
8. Ikawa Kazuko, "Statues of Bishamonten Supported by Jiten: Research on the So-called Tobatsu Bishamonten," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 229 (July 1963), pp. 53–73.
9. Ibid., figs. 12–14; Junkichi Mayuyama, ed. *Japanese Art in the West* (Tokyo, 1966), no. 18.
10. Ikawa, "Statues of Bishamonten," p. 62.



## Seated Amida (Buddha of the Western Paradise)

Fujiwara period (late eleventh to early twelfth century)

Polychromed cypress wood

H. 81.5 cm (32 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.)

PUBLISHED: John Rosenfield, *Japanese Arts of the Heian Period: 794–1185* (New York, 1967), no. 27; Kuno Takeshi, "Statue of Golden Amitābha in Red Robe," *Kobijutsu* 1 (January 1963), pp. 77–79.



Amida, the Lord of the Western Paradise, is the most glorious of all Buddhas, and his paradise is the perfectly beautiful land of eternal bliss.<sup>1</sup> Although he became the most popular Buddha in the Far East, many scholars see a possible incursion of Near Eastern religion in the concept of this Buddha, since there is little evidence of Amida worship in the early history of Indian Buddhism. Amida is the Japanese word for the two Sanskrit names by which he is known in India. One is Amitābha, which means “immeasurable light,” and the other, Amitāyus, meaning “limitless life span.” Amitāyus particularly appealed to the Chinese, since the idea was similar to their ancient aspirations for longevity. The Chinese learned about this Buddha as early as the second half of the second century A.D., when sutras that describe him and his heavenly residence became available in Chinese translations.<sup>2</sup> More than two hundred sutras that discuss the merits of this Buddha were then rapidly translated into Chinese. The record of visual representations of Amida can be traced to the mid-fourth century in China,<sup>3</sup> and by the seventh century, worship of him all but replaced that of the other Buddhas.<sup>4</sup> By the late seventh century, the Japanese became acutely aware of this vogue, and they made a number of memorable images representing Amida.<sup>5</sup> The most famous seventh-century Japanese work is the triad of Amida and two Bodhisattvas, Kannon and Seishi, which is housed in the so-called “Lady Tachibana’s Shrine” at





Hōryūji in Nara. A large Amida paradise scene once decorated the wall inside the Golden Hall of the same temple until it was destroyed by fire in 1949. The Amida cult had a phenomenal rise in the late tenth century, largely the result of the teachings of priests like Kūya (903–972) and Genshin (942–1017). Genshin's book, the *Ōjō Yōshū* (*Essentials of Salvation*),<sup>6</sup> written in 985, particularly had a decisive influence in popularizing the concept of *raigō*, that Amida with his host of Bodhisattvas will descend to earth and escort the dying devotee back to his blissful Western Paradise (see no. 15).

The Paradise Cult and the concept of *raigō* had a profound impact on the aesthetic-minded noblemen of the Fujiwara period, who desired assurance about rebirth in the Western Paradise. Many Buddhist arts of the period were dedicated to this cult: temple buildings and paintings reproduced the glorious details of the paradise, statues of Amida Buddha were made, and paintings of *raigō* provided the dying person with the vision of his welcome. The cult also emphasized the nine degrees of welcome by Amida, which are precisely scaled to nine degrees of merits, and these necessitated sets of nine Amida statues to be installed in some Amida halls. The Phoenix Hall (Hōōdō) of Byōdō-in at Uji and its Amida statue carved by the master sculptor Jōchō (d. 1057) in 1053 established the ideal canon of Amida and his paradise for the next one hundred years.

The benign Amida here belongs to this popular tradition. He is dressed in a red robe and signals his welcome to the devotees into his paradise by gently joining his thumbs and index fingers. The hand gesture, or mudra, signifies the *jōbon geshō* degree (bottom level in the first class), one of the most popular Amida mudras in the late Fujiwara period. Buddha is seated in quiet concentration with eyes downcast. The curls are small and delicate. The face is soft and round, like the full moon of an autumn night, and the shoulders and torso are broad, although flat. Both face and torso were originally covered with gold leaf, most of which has flaked off. The long legs are folded to form a low, wide, and stable base. The red garment with black windowpane patterns is loosely draped, creating regular, low-relief folds. Broad lotus petals on the large, low pedestal are arranged in alternating rows. The painted

designs on the petals in red, green, and white are later additions.

Except for the mudra and a few other details, this Amida statue conforms stylistically to the standard canon established by Jōchō with the Amida he carved for the Phoenix Hall. Kuno Takeshi attributes this statue to a workshop in Nara, which, like all others of that period, was influenced by Jōchō's model, yet retained some of the ancient Nara tradition.<sup>7</sup> This workshop, which assumed the vanguard of sculpture later on, at the beginning of the Kamakura period, traditionally favored several features seen on this statue that deviate from the standard canon of Jōchō's formula. For example, the modeling of the facial features is slightly softer and fleshier than the sharp, linear representations in works derived from Jōchō's model. In this respect, this Amida is linked to other sculptures from the Nara area that date from the late eleventh to the early twelfth centuries, such as the Yakushi Buddhas of Saimyōji and Fukugenji, the latter being dated by inscription to 1085. Amida's red robe suggests a continuation of the Mikkyō influence from the Early Heian period, while the standard Kyoto works are usually painted entirely in gold. Kuno suggests that this statue was probably backed against a simple painted aureole, unlike the elaborately carved ones popular in the Kyoto workshops.

1. For a good summary of the cult of this Buddha, see Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland, 1959), pp. 141 ff.
2. The second-century translation was made by a Kushan, Lokaraksa. See Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XII, no. 361.
3. For the literary references to the early representations of this god in China, see Soper, *Literary Evidence*, p. 14; Ōmura Seigai, *Shina Bijutsu Shi: Chōso Hen* (Tokyo, 1915).
4. Ōmura, *Shina Bijutsu Shi*, p. 598.
5. Naitō Tōichirō, *Nihon Bukkyō Zuzō Shi* (Tokyo, 1932), p. 120.
6. The first two sections of this book were translated by Philip Yampolsky in "Essentials of Salvation: A Translation of the First Two Divisions of Ōjō Yōshū by Genshin" (M. A. Thesis, Columbia University, 1948).
7. Kuno Takeshi, "Statue of Golden Amitābha in Red Robe," *Kobijutsu* 1 (January 1963), pp. 78–79.

## Sōgyō Hachiman (Hachiman in the Guise of a Buddhist Monk)

Fujiwara period (late twelfth century)

Polychromed cypress wood

H. 35 cm (13¾ in.)

EX COLLECTION: Shirasu Masako, Tokyo

PUBLISHED: Kunō Takeshi, *Kantō Chōkoku no Kenkyū* (*Study of the History of Japanese Sculpture in the Kantō District*) (Tokyo, 1964), p. 324.

This small, beguiling statue represents the Shinto deity Hachiman. The development of this deity, known as Sōgyō Hachiman (“god Hachiman in the guise of a Buddhist monk”), represents one of the most complex efforts made by the Japanese to reconcile their native religion, Shinto, with the powerful forces of Buddhism, a “foreign” religion. Reconciliation was mutually desirable for the survival of both religions. The amalgamation of a native faith with an invading one was not peculiar to Japan alone; the Chinese made similar attempts to syncretize their own Taoist spirits with Buddhist deities. Japanese efforts, however, represent a much more determined attitude of both establishments, Buddhist and Shinto. Known in Japan as Honchi Suijaku or Shimbutsu Shūgō, the amalgamation of the two religions seems to have been started immediately after the introduction of Buddhism to Japan. The first such attempt is already recorded in the literature dating to 699.<sup>1</sup> Hachiman was one of the first Shinto gods to be assimilated into the Buddhist world. In a well-publicized event, he was invoked by the court in 747 to assist in the successful completion of the ambitious project to cast the Great Buddha at Tōdaiji in Nara. By 783, Hachiman’s assimilation into the Buddhist pantheon was complete: he was entitled Bodhisattva (Bosatsu, in Japanese) and was called Dai Jizai Bosatsu or Hachiman Dai Bosatsu.<sup>2</sup>

From the second half of the eighth century, Buddhist statues were housed at Shinto shrines, as documented

by an increasing number of literary references, while Shinto statues were also installed there for the first time.<sup>3</sup> Again, Hachiman is the subject of the oldest extant Shinto sculpture. The central image of the triad at Tōji in Kyoto represents Hachiman as a Buddhist monk, attended by two goddesses in court costumes. Hachiman’s special prominence throughout Japanese history and his longevity in Shinto iconography are closely related to the political and religious aspirations of the ruling house in ancient Japan. Hachiman is a popular pronunciation of Yawata, an obscure local god who is believed to have originally resided at the summit of Mount Maki in northern Kyūshū. Like many other Shinto gods, he started his career first as the guardian deity of the agricultural community in that region. By the late seventh century, he was established as the guardian of powerful local clans, the Usa and Oga families, who controlled copper mines in the area. It was only natural, then, that he was invoked at the monumental undertaking of casting the Great Buddha at Tōdaiji. From the late Nara to the early Heian period, Hachiman’s influence spread to the metropolitan area, and it assumed a national significance. Because of the close proximity of his birthplace to southern China and Korea, which were considered to be a source of danger, Japanese rulers came to rely upon him as the protector against possible threats from abroad. Thus, he acquired a new role as a military god, becoming the tutelary deity of many military families, most notably the famous Minamoto clan (also known as Genji). Hachiman’s popularity has remained high throughout Japan’s history: today more than 30,000 Shinto shrines profess their connections with this god.

Sōgyō Hachiman as an iconographic type illustrates the curious theological transformations required of Shinto gods. It was believed that Shinto gods desired to seek Buddhist salvation and enlightenment, as well as the status of Bodhisattva. As a preliminary step to enlightenment, Shinto gods had to enter the priesthood, which required the tonsured head and priestly garb. Thus, theoretically, not only Hachiman, but any Shinto god who has taken the first step towards his Buddhist identity may be represented in *sōgyō*—“in the guise

of a monk.” During the Fujiwara period, when courtly taste governed all matters of the nation, Shinto gods were identified with members of the imperial court, and the Shinto shrine was considered a palace. Hachiman came to be identified with the Emperor Ōjin (r. 270–310), who is believed to have been born in northern Kyūshū, which is also Hachiman’s birthplace. Many so-called Sōgyō Hachiman, especially when represented in triad, are believed to represent this emperor, and the two female goddesses who complete the triad are then considered either empresses or princesses.

Since Hachiman is dressed in a monk’s habit and his head is shaven like an ordinary monk, he cannot be easily distinguished from portraits of real Buddhist monks. However, the portraits of monks are traditionally strongly realistic, often exaggerating the real or imaginary facial idiosyncrasies associated with particular personalities. Portraits of Hachiman, on the other hand, usually show him in the idealized form appropriate for a divine being. The Buddhist pantheon has its own monkish-looking Bosatsu, Jizō (Kṣitigarbha, in Sanskrit), and he may be distinguished from Hachiman by a few features: the urna (a protuberance on the forehead from which the light of wisdom emanates), the garment that partially exposes his chest, and occasional jewelries. These few features help to identify Shinto gods in monk’s guise, but it is even more difficult to distinguish Hachiman from other Shinto gods represented as monks, unless one is able to consult the temple or shrine tradition.

In many Shinto shrines, old trees were revered as sacred, and statues were often made out of pieces salvaged from dying or fallen trees. Throughout history, Shinto statues were made essentially in the *ichiboku* (“single-block”) technique. While works executed in the true *yosegi* technique are divided into parts by an

established system and are hollowed out, Shinto statues are usually assembled randomly and are left solid. This piece was carved in this modified single-block technique, with separate pieces of wood for arms, sleeves, and knees. The god holds a *cintāmani* (“wish-granting jewel”) in his left hand and raises his right hand. Both hands, however, are recent replacements. He is seated on a simple wooden board, which serves as the pedestal. The pedestal is probably original; its four corners show simple, charming floral decorations in colors. The statue was originally red and black on the robe, white on the face and chest, and green on the smoothly shaven head, as a suggestion of the tonsure. The modeling of facial features and body is simple and direct. The feeling of solidity and serenity is enhanced by several features: the thick wide base created by the folded legs; his round, sloping shoulders; large, gentle facial features; and the minimal details of the habit and its folds. Recently Kuno Takeshi dated this statue to the late twelfth century, at the end of the Fujiwara period; it is one of the very few examples of Sōgyō Hachiman preserved from that period. Hachiman was often represented as an independent deity already in the late twelfth century, but we cannot ascertain whether this piece was originally accompanied by appropriate female attendants.

1. Kuroita Katsumi, ed., *Shoku Nihon Gi*, Shintei Zōho Kōkushi Taikei, vol. II (Tokyo, 1935), p. 7, in the entry for the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth month, the second year of the emperor Mom’mu’s reign. This date corresponds in the Western calendar to January 699. For other literary records on this problem, see Oka Naomi, *Shinzō Chōkoku no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1966); Kanamori Jun, *Nihon Chōkoku-shi no Kenkyū* (Kyoto, 1949).
2. For the literary records on Hachiman, see Nakano Hatayoshi, *Hachiman Shinkō Shi no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1967).
3. Oka, *Shinzō Chōkoku*, p. 37.





## A Guardian Deity

Fujiwara period (late twelfth century)  
Polychromed cypress wood  
H. 40.5 cm (16 in.)



This small, youthful guardian deity appears ready to dart at his enemy. The facial features are drawn together in fierce concentration, the eyes bulge out, the upper teeth bite hard on the lower lip. Under the heavy armor, the small body is taut, with arms flung out and stomach thrust forward, as if ready for a sudden dash. A metal helmet with a pointed tip is worn; in front of it is a small piece of broken metal ornament. The statue now looks almost completely white, but originally brilliant colors of red and green decorated the armor over the white pigment.

Although a similar menacing expression is common to Buddhist guardians, the exact identity of this deity must remain speculative, since he has no specific attribute. His small stature, simple armor, and unadorned boots suggest he is a minor guardian, perhaps an attendant of a guardian deity. While many such soldier attendants are said to accompany the Four Guardians of the Four Directions (Shiten'nō), few of these figures are represented in Japanese Buddhist arts.<sup>1</sup> The small fragment of metal ornament still clinging to his helmet might have once represented his attribute. A group known as the Hachi Bushū (Eight Devas), guardians of Buddha's Law, is perhaps the most famous set of deities who wear headgear bearing various attributes. However, after the famous set at Kōfukuji in Nara was made in the eighth century, Hachi Bushū virtually ceased to be represented except in Esoteric Buddhist Mandalas. Another group of military attendants, Jūni Shinshō (Twelve Guards), who accompany Ya-

kushi (Bhaisajyaguru), the healing Buddha, was represented frequently in painting and occasionally in sculpture. According to a sutra on Yakushi,<sup>2</sup> the twelve gods are firmly committed to carry out Yakushi's twelve plans to aid his devotees in need of help. Each of the twelve is associated with the twelve divisions of the day of the ancient calendar (two modern hours), thus they are sometimes regarded as the guardians of time, and they often wear headgear with zodiac symbols. The most famous example of this group is the eighth-century sculpture at Shin Yakushiji in Nara. The present statue might have been one of these twelve guardian deities.

Fierce guardians and small, youthful figures of minor attendants were favorite subjects of Kamakura sculptors, who welcomed the chance to represent bodily movements and menacing facial expressions in realistic terms. However, in this statue, anger and bodily movement are suppressed within a tense body, without any overt gesture of force. Such restraint as well as the broad treatment of the garments, with the details kept to a few essentials, suggest a late Fujiwara date for this work.

1. They are mentioned in various sutras on the Four Guardians: for example, Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinhū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XVI, no. 663.
2. For example, one translated in 650 by Hsüan-tsang. See *ibid.*, vol. XIV, no. 450, pp. 404–408.



## Kichijōten (Srī-Lakshmi)

Kamakura period (first half of the thirteenth century)  
Polychromed cypress wood  
H. 65.5 cm (25<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

This plump, genial young woman is Kichijōten (Srī-Lakshmi), who is often called by two names in her native India. She is an ancient Indian goddess of good fortune, consort of the Hindu deity, Vishnu, the benevolent preserver of the world. When she was absorbed into the Buddhist pantheon, she was made the goddess of wealth and beauty, and she became the most popular female deity in the repertory of Japanese Buddhist sculpture and is known as Kichijōten.<sup>1</sup> The liturgies dedicated to this goddess, in which devotees repent their failings and misdeeds, are recorded with unusual clarity and historical continuity beginning in 739.<sup>2</sup> Since then, generations of the Japanese ruling house have continued to pray to her for their political success through repentance and atonement. Her unusual prominence in the early history of Japanese Buddhism is partly because she is described in one of the most influential sutras of the Nara period, the *Kōnkōmyō Saishōō Kyō*, which was believed to be the protective instrument of national safety.<sup>3</sup> Her popularity continued even after Esoteric Buddhism overshadowed many other deities in the Early Heian period. Kūkai (also known as Kōbō Daishi, 773–835) and many other Mikkyō-oriented monks brought Kichijōten sutras and statues from China.

Although the lady continued to be popular as the subject of painting and sculpture, her traditional independence seems to have been diminished somewhat in the Fujiwara period. During that time, her name is more frequently mentioned in literature as an attendant of Shaka in a triad formation, together with a male deity, Bishamonten (also known as Tamonten, see no. 8), a guardian of the North. By the late eleventh century, she was regarded as Bishamon's wife. In a triad formation, she stands at the side of the male deity with





a small boy attendant, Zen'nishi (Janavasabha), Bishamon's offspring. The arrangement of this particular triad is especially well known to art historians in Japan, since it is the main icon of the temple at Shigisan, the subject of the celebrated *emaki*, the *Shigisan Engi Emaki* from the mid-twelfth century. In the meantime, Kichijōten's role expanded, and she was revered as the protector of good harvest, childbirth, and sea voyages. Kichijōten was often painted in scrolls, but these paintings suffered extraordinary damages while displayed at the Kichijōten liturgies, which sometimes lasted two weeks or longer. Literary records often speak of the need to replace worn and damaged paintings of Kichijōten with new statues, which explains the disproportionately greater number of sculptures representing the goddess.

Iconographic features of Kichijōten representations remain unchanged throughout Japanese history, and they adhere to details explicitly cited in the *Bishamon-ten Sutra*, translated by Amoghavajra (known in Japan as Fukū, 705–774).<sup>4</sup> She is dressed in the luxurious costume of T'ang China, often wearing many jewelries. In her left hand, she holds a *cintāmani* ("wish-granting jewel"); her right hand either holds a lotus flower or forms the mudra of offering (*varamudra*, or *sega-in*, in Japanese). The technical means of representing the goddess in sculpture also changed very little throughout the centuries. While most statues of other Buddhist deities were made of several pieces of wood joined in the *yosegi* technique during the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods, statues of Kichijōten were still essentially carved from one block of wood in the *ichiboku* technique, popular in the Early Heian period. One notable, though minor change is found in a group of Kichijōten statues dating from the Kamakura period. It is a wide, shawl-like piece of cloth draped over the goddess's shoulders, looking in some instances like wings of a bird. The edges of this shawl are scalloped, forming scroll patterns at corners in a pictorial manner. Although this particular detail is found on the dresses

worn by female figures in Chinese Buddhist paintings of the tenth century, in Japan it is found only on sculptures from the Kamakura period. These sculptures, which are not limited to representations of Kichijōten or female deities, reflect strong influence from Sung art, and the particular decorative feature of the shawl is considered one of the Sung-inspired details.

This statue of Kichijōten is a good example of representations of this goddess from the Kamakura period. The head and the arms below the shoulders were carved from separate pieces of wood and joined to the main part of the body, but the rest is carved in the *ichiboku* technique. The hands are modern replacements, but they most likely reproduce the original mudra faithfully. There are still many traces of color on the dress, suggesting that she was originally draped in a brightly colored robe with floral designs. The small, full face is clearly but simply modeled; the delicate facial features are well defined. A strong forward thrust of the long sleeves hints at movement and spontaneity, but the pose remains relaxed, natural, and quiet. The beautiful combination of repose and realism suggests that this statue was made in the early years of the Kamakura period, in the first half of the thirteenth century.

1. For a comparative study of Japanese sculptures of this deity, see Ikawa Kazuko, "Statues of Kichijōten," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 210 (May 1960), pp. 19–46.
2. Kuroita Katsumi, ed., *Shoku Nihon Gi*, Shintei Zōho Kokushi Taiei, vol. II (Tokyo, 1935), p. 155, in the entry for the seventh month, eleventh year of the Tempyō era (739).
3. Its Sanskrit name is *Suvarṇaprabhāsattamarāja-sūtra*, and it was first translated into Chinese by Dharmarakṣa (397–439). This translation is in Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XVI, no. 663. It is, however, an incomplete translation; the complete one was made in the T'ang dynasty by I-ching: see *ibid.*, vol. XVI, no. 665. For an English translation of this sutra, see Hōkei Idzumi, *The Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra: A Mahāyāna Text Called the Golden Splendour* (Kyoto, 1931).
4. Takakusu and Watanabe, *Daizōkyō*, vol. XXI, no. 1249.

## Fudō Myōō (Acalanātha)

Kamakura period (early thirteenth century)  
 Attributed to Kaikei (active, 1183–1236)  
 Lacquered wood, with inlaid eyes  
 H. 51.5 cm (20¼ in.)

This ferocious-looking deity, Fudō Myōō, is known in India as Acalanātha or Acala, one of the many names of Shiva, the terrible Hindu god of destruction and re-incarnation.<sup>1</sup> Both his Sanskrit and Japanese names mean “the unshakable or immovable one”; true to this name, he came to be considered the indomitable and militant adherent of Buddha’s Law. Originally a pagan deity, he was converted to Buddhism and was assigned to a very lowly position as a servant and messenger of Buddha. Gradually he climbed to a higher rank; in Esoteric Buddhism, he became the emissary of the Supreme God Dainichi (Mahāvairocana, in Sanskrit); still later he was promoted to the rank of a guardian, the subjugator of Buddha’s enemies, and finally became a manifestation of Dainichi’s own power and virtues. In this capacity, he is depicted in Mikkyō temples as the central figure in the group of five Myōō (Vidyārājas, in Sanskrit; kings of wisdom and conquerers of evil forces).

Although his origin in India is universally acknowledged, no representation of Acala has been found in the arts of Hindu India. Neither has an example of his representation been found in Central Asia or pre-T’ang China. Scriptural sources for this fierce god are all T’ang or later translations, such as the *Fukū Kensaku Shimpen Shingon Kyō*, which was translated into Chinese in 709 by an Indian named Bodhiruchi.<sup>2</sup> Iconographic rules are specified in greater detail in the Dainichi sutra, the basic sutra for Esoteric Buddhism. This sutra was translated in 725 by another Indian, Subhakarasiṃha (637–735, known in Japan as Zem’mui), with the help of his Chinese disciple, I-hsing (683–727, known in Japan as Ichigyō).<sup>3</sup> According to the description given in these sutras, the body of Acala is chubby and dark—black or dark blue, symbolic of his

role as the subjugator of Buddha’s adversaries. He has a terrible face: his eyes bulge and the left one is either closed or smaller than the right; fangs protrude to bite his lower lip. These features are in sharp contrast to the aristocratic look of Bodhisattvas, and they reflect his original, lowly status as well as his late arrival to the Buddhist pantheon. Fudō’s tenacious commitment to the protection of Buddha’s Law is symbolized by the rock formation on which he is usually shown either seated or standing. In his left hand, he holds a lasso for arresting evil spirits, and in his right, a sword for cutting evil forces. His long hair is gathered at the left side of his face in several knots—as many knots as there are reincarnations through which he will serve as the faithful servant of his master. He often supports a small, six-petaled flower or a lotus flower on his head, signifying his determination to uphold Buddha’s Law. Fudō differs from other terrible gods, who are often depicted in violent movements, in that he is usually motionless, since the mightiest and fiercest power is believed to be best expressed in the motionless state.

Only two T’ang sculptures of Fudō have been found so far in China,<sup>4</sup> but Fudō became one of the most popular and enduring Mikkyō deities in Japan, where numerous paintings and sculptures have been preserved from the Early Heian period. Although some iconographic variations were created—for example, Fudō may appear in a group representation with his child attendants, Kongara and Seitaka, or he may be shown with multiple arms—the basic iconographic rule set forth in the sutras mentioned above continued to be observed.

This example of Fudō is stylistically similar to those that follow the iconographic rule established in the Early Heian period. Although scriptural sources describe him as cross-eyed or with his left eye closed, he is represented in most Japanese examples with large, bulging eyes. Here, his enormous, glaring eyes are inlaid. The statue was carved in many pieces of wood assembled in the *yosegi* technique, and its interior was completely hollowed out. The surface of the statue was first covered with coarse linen, over which a heavy coating of black lacquer was applied. Originally his dhoti cloth was decorated with gold and colors, most

of which have flaked off. His metal jewelries may be original, but the attributes that he holds in his hands are later replacements. He knits his brows and bites his lower lip to suppress his fury. The strong, long legs are concealed under the gentle, natural flow of the folds of the dhoti. The softness of the youthful body is succinctly expressed with round stomach, fingers, and feet.

This Fudō is almost identical to another statue of Fudō signed by Kaikei, and housed at Sambō-in, a sub-temple of Daigoji in Kyoto. One of the two greatest masters of Kamakura sculpture, Kaikei is well known to American students of Japanese art for his statue of Miroku Bosatsu, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Kaikei is believed to have been a pupil of Kōkei, father of Unkei (d. 1223), who was Kaikei's slightly younger colleague and a great master of the Kamakura period. Kaikei and Unkei collaborated at the monumental project to refurbish Tōdaiji of Nara with many new statues after the temple's destruction in the civil war of 1180. The most famous collaboration between the two masters are the Niō, a pair of colossal guardian figures at the Great Southern Gate of this temple. Kaikei holds a very unusual place in the history of Japanese sculpture, as he often signed and titled his works and sometimes included the dates when he carved the statues. His signatures have been found on more than twenty works, among the earliest of which is the Miroku Bosatsu in Boston, dated to 1189. Kaikei carved the statue of Fudō for Sambō-in in May of 1203.<sup>5</sup>

The statues in the Sambō-in and Burke collections are remarkably alike in iconographic details and size (the Sambō-in version is 54 cm high). However, there are subtle stylistic differences. The Fudō here has a stronger sense of three-dimensionality with its more exaggerated modeling of the fleshy face, the slightly more stressed forward thrust of the arms, and the more complex and deeply cut drapery folds. Above all, while the Sambō-in version appears extremely soft and sup-

ple, this statue is noticeably harder in its modeling. Although the statement cannot be confirmed, this figure is said to have been in the collection of a Kyoto temple, Shōren-in. Kaikei had a close tie with this temple and its aristocratic abbot, priest Shinshō. Through the efforts of this priest, Kaikei obtained some commissions for work at other temples.<sup>6</sup> He worked for Shōren-in at various times: his services there in 1210 and 1216 are recorded in the *Mon'yō Ki*, the record of events at this temple.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, however, there is no reference in this record to a Fudō statue made by Kaikei.

The characteristic features of the Fudō in the Burke collection correspond with the stylistic changes noted in works dating from the last period in Kaikei's career, namely the twenty-five year period after around 1210. Especially noticeable are the modeling and the drapery folds, which are similar to many Amida statues that he carved in the same period. Kaikei was an unusually prolific artist who had a large group of able young assistants when he was in his late sixties to eighties.<sup>8</sup> It is possible that our statue of Fudō was made with the help of Kaikei's disciples when he was an old man.

1. For a detailed discussion of this deity, see Sawa Ryūken, *Mikkyō Bijutsu Ron* (Tokyo, 1960), pp. 40–46.
2. The Sanskrit name of this sutra is *Amoghapāśakalparāja-sūtra*; see Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XX, no. 1092.
3. The sutra is called *Dai Birushana Jōbutsu Shimpen Kaji Kyō* in Japanese; see *ibid.*, vol. XVIII, no. 848.
4. One is in the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, and the other was excavated from Ch'ang-an. For the latter, see *Archaeological Treasures Excavated in the People's Republic of China*, exh. cat., (Tokyo and Kyoto, 1973), no. 154.
5. Mōri Hisashi, *Bussbi Kaikei Ron* (Tokyo, 1961).
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 55–57.
7. Ono Gem'myō, ed., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Zuzō* (Tokyo, 1932), vols. XI, XII.
8. Mōri Hisashi, "Footnotes on Sculptor Kaikei," *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 71 (July 1969), p. 28.







## Bishamonten (Guardian of the North)

Kamakura period (late thirteenth century)  
Polychromed wood and *kirikane*, with inlaid eyes  
H. including demons, 42 cm (16½ in.)

The four guardians of the cardinal directions, the Shiten'nō, were originally Hindu gods who were assimilated into the Buddhist pantheon as protectors of Buddha's Law. Known in India by the Sanskrit name, Lokapālas, they were a law-enforcement group headed by the chief of the Vedic gods, Indra (Taishakuten, in Japanese).<sup>1</sup> They seem to have been adopted into the Buddhist pantheon quite early in the history of Indian Buddhism, and their names appear in many sutras in connection with various aspects of Buddha's life. By the middle of the second century B.C. in India, the Lokapālas had been given a distinct iconography, which remained unchanged throughout the history of Buddhism. At Bhārhut, for example, the Lokapālas are dressed as aristocrats with no hint of their military role. They trample upon squirming earth-demons, however, an act that is symbolic of their functions as subjugators of Buddha's enemies. Throughout Central Asia and the Far East, the military aspect of the foursome was more emphatic; they wear armor, carry weapons, and often express fierce rage on their faces and in bodily movements. The four guardians were also absorbed into the Mikkyō pantheon, where, with eight other fierce kings, they constitute the Twelve Devas (Jūniten), who protect the four directions and the midway points and symbolize heaven, earth, sun, and moon.

Detailed descriptions of their functions, appearances, and attributes are given in many sutras, such as the *Konkōmyō Saishōō Kyō* (*Suvarṇaprabhāsattamarāja-sūtra*).<sup>2</sup> In Hindu mythology, the Lokapālas are believed to have their sumptuous palaces at four sides of the cosmic mountain, Sumeru. In accordance with this ancient belief, Buddhist temple halls are provided with a large platform symbolizing Mount Sumeru. Statues of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are placed in the center of

the platform, and its four corners are protected by the four guardians. Normally, the status of the Shiten'nō in the Buddhist pantheon and Buddhist temple halls is subservient to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. However, in the early history of Japanese Buddhism, the foursome acquired a special status as protectors of the nation, and an entire temple was once dedicated to them. This is the Osaka temple Shiten'nōji, where a modern reconstruction of the original sixth-century building stands today. This temple was built in 593 by Prince Shōtoku (d. 622) as an expression of his gratitude for the Shiten'nō's assistance, which was purportedly given him during his campaign against anti-Buddhist forces in a civil war.

Among the four kings, the guardian of the North is regarded as the most powerful, evidently because in India and the Far East that direction is traditionally considered a source of danger. This guardian, who is known by the Sanskrit name, Vaishravaṇa, is also believed to have been identical to the lowly creature called Kuvera, chief of the earth demons, the Yakshas. "Bishamonten" is the Japanese name given to this guardian, who is also known by another Japanese name, "Tamonten," meaning the one who hears (*mon*) plenty (*ta*) of Buddha's sermons and protects his Law. As the most powerful of the group, he is said to have three sumptuous palaces, and he alone is given the honor of being represented as an independent deity, especially at the time of military crises. In group representations, he is usually differentiated from his colleagues by a miniature stupa ("pagoda") held in his hand, a symbol of Buddha's Law, and, at the same time, a special treasure granted to him by the Buddha. Because of the special attribute, he was later worshipped as a popular guardian deity of wealth, and in folk religion he is one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune (Shichi Fukujin, in Japanese). A special derivative of this deity, who is supported by an earth goddess Prthivi, is known in Japanese as Tobatsu Bishamonten (see no. 2). Various sutras on Bishamon refer to his family: in a complex and mysterious process that includes an exchange of identity, he is believed sometimes to be capable of transforming himself into an infant boy, Zen'nishi



(Janavasabha), who is also his own son.<sup>3</sup> In a triad arrangement, Bishamonten and Kichijōten may flank Shaka as husband and wife, but more frequently, Bishamonten holds the central position in a triad with his wife and son at his sides. Bishamonten is also said to have had several more sons, who were sometimes included in a larger family portrait.<sup>4</sup> Except for these variations, iconographic details of Bishamon remained almost unchanged throughout the history of Japanese Buddhism.

The small, youthful, but stern Bishamonten here stands firmly on two demons—scowling, amusing-looking Niramba and Biramba. Bishamon's hip is thrust to one side, and his left elbow rests on it. In the left hand he holds a miniature pagoda, while in the right is a long lance. Both attributes, as well as the flame-decorated halo behind the head, are later replacements. The statue was originally painted in bright colors and gold, and the small, shining eyes are inlaid. Although quite small, the statue is made of several pieces of wood, and its interior is completely hollowed out. Two short tenons are fitted into the mortise in the backs of the two demons under his feet. The demon at our right, with large, bulging and inlaid eyes, turns his head upward in amazement. His body was originally painted green, and his hair, gold. His companion at our left, who squirms under the pressure of his conqueror, was painted bright red.

Bishamonten's face with full cheeks is small but carefully modeled, his nose is fleshy, and his short neck is

almost buried in his heavy shoulders. These features are characteristic of the type of Bishamon statues conceived by Unkei (d. 1223)—the master of sculpture in the Kamakura period—such as those he made in the 1180s for Ganjōju-in in Izu, near Kamakura, and Jōra-kuji in the same vicinity. In this piece, a slightly forced contraposto and a distinct lateral thrust of two arms create a two-dimensional effect, and the small facial features impart a quiet and restrained mood, thereby softening the raw dynamism that characterizes Unkei's works. Control of such tension without neglect of stylistic details is characteristic of Tankei (1173–1265), eldest of Unkei's six sons, all of whom assisted their father in major projects. Stylistically, the piece especially resembles the triad of Bishamonten, Kichijōten, and Zen'nishi made by Tankei for Sekkeiji in Kōchi prefecture, Shikoku Island, and may therefore be attributed to an artist who closely followed Tankei's style or model.

1. For a summary of this group, see Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland, 1959), pp. 231 ff.
2. This sutra was translated many times into Chinese, but the most complete translation was made by I-ching. See Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XVI, no. 665. For the English translation of this sutra, see Hōkei Idzumi, *The Suvarnaprabhāsa-sūtra: A Mahāyāna Text Called the Golden Splendour* (Kyoto, 1931).
3. Takakusu and Watanabe, *Daizōkyō*, vol. XVI, no. 665, p. 431.
4. Ibid.

## Sutra Cases

## Hexagonal Container

Fujiwara period: dated by inscription to the fifteenth day of the tenth month, the second year of the Taji era (1127)

## Bronze

H. including lid, 41.5 cm (16 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.); D. of body, 8.4 cm (3 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.)

EX COLLECTION: Ōshita Naojirō, Osaka Prefecture

PUBLISHED: Umehara Sueji, "Taji Ninen no

Kyōzutsu," *Shiseki to Bijutsu* 343 (April 1964), pl. 1.

## Cylindrical Container

Fujiwara period (first half of the twelfth century)

## Bronze

H. including lid, 44.5 cm (18 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.); D. of body, 10 cm (3 $\frac{15}{16}$  in.)

These two receptacles document an extraordinary religious mania of the Fujiwara period. The containers were designed to hold Buddhist sutras, most likely written on paper scrolls, which were to be interred in sutra mounds, called *kyōzuka*. More than two hundred *kyōzuka* have been excavated, mostly through accidental discoveries, and the majority of them are dated to the period less than two hundred years from the beginning of the eleventh century to the late twelfth century. These sutras afford an intimate and vivid view of the religious preoccupation of the Fujiwara Buddhists, since many of them as well as their containers include inscriptions stating the donors' names, the dates of interment, and the purposes for which the act was performed.

According to the most influential Buddhist doctrine of the time, the Pure Land cult, Japan was entering into its dark age, the Mappō. This marked the decline of Buddha's Law, which was to begin in 1050, according to one method of accounting. During the Mappō, it was believed, even the works of Buddha would disappear, and therefore, records of his words and teachings (sutras) had to be preserved by some means until the time of the coming of the Buddhist messiah, Maitreya (Miroku, in Japanese), thousands of years thereafter.



Sutras were copied for posterity on permanent materials, such as tiles, stone slabs, and bronze; those written on the more fragile, paper scrolls were placed in containers of bronze or other durable materials, which were then carefully buried underground, protected by stone slabs above and below.<sup>1</sup>

The many copies of the *Lotus Sutra* found among the interred Buddhist scriptures also reflects the strongest religious persuasion of this period, namely the desire for rebirth in Amida's Paradise. More plebeian motivations are also recorded, such as prayers for recovery from illness, personal happiness and prosperity, and the blissful afterlife of the departed kin. At times, sutras copied or treasured by the deceased were also buried.

It is not known exactly when and where this extraordinary practice of burying sutras originated, but an instance of copying a sutra on permanent material is known from the early ninth century.<sup>2</sup> No example of a buried sutra or sutra mound is known before the start of the eleventh century, however. The earliest, and certainly the most famous sutra mound known so far was first discovered in 1691 at Kimbusen (Mount Kimbu), south of Nara, the sacred place founded by En no Gyōja (634–?) and a popular pilgrimage site for the court nobles of the Fujiwara period. The sutras and other objects recovered from the Kimbusen mound had been donated by Fujiwara Michinaga (966–1027), patriarch of the most powerful Fujiwara clan.<sup>3</sup> The practice of burying sutras spread throughout the country in the latter half of the eleventh century, and sutra mounds are found in places ranging from northern Honshū to Kyūshū. The heaviest concentration of sutra mounds dating before the end of the twelfth century is found in northern Kyūshū and in the Kyoto-Nara area.<sup>4</sup> It seems that the custom faded out at the beginning of the Kamakura period, around 1195,<sup>5</sup> and it was soon replaced by stone pagodas erected for similar purposes.

Some sutra cases were made of iron or pottery, but the majority of them, especially those from the Fujiwara period, are cylindrical, gilt-bronze vessels, like the one included here. The tubular containers are usually topped with a lid surmounted by a spire, which consists of small rings and a knob, resembling the spire surmounting the Buddhist pagoda. Such gilt-bronze cases were sometimes placed inside stone or ceramic



containers made especially for this purpose. More frequently, however, large Sueki pottery jars were turned upside down over bronze cases for protection. In many instances, the small burial chamber was filled with charcoal to protect the cases from humidity, a practice used often in tomb chambers of the late Chou and Han periods in Ch'ang-sha, south China. Such precautions were apparently taken with the burial chamber in which this hexagonal sutra case was interred, since when it was repaired in Japan, small pieces of charcoal were discovered around the seams where the metal panels are joined.<sup>6</sup>

The hexagon-shaped sutra container is rare among examples from the Fujiwara period in another respect: originally there were six charming bronze birds perched at each corner of the hexagon-shaped rim of the lid, only five of which remain in their original places. The tiny perforations on the beaks of these birds suggest that ornamental strings of small glass beads once hung there. In some excavations, beads were found in their original places, but it is quite uncommon to find such bead-holding birds; only one other example, recovered from a mound in Fukuoka prefecture in northern Kyūshū, is known. There are also traces of gilding, a reminder of the luxuriant beauty of its original condition. Inscriptions appear on two panels of this case, but they are too faint to allow good photographic reproduction. Under strong light, however, the writings are legible, and in translation they read as follows:

- [1] The second year of Taiji (1127), year of snake.  
Tenth month, fifteenth day, day of snake.  
[2] Donated by the priests Gem'myō and Seiyo.  
Shimoda . . .

This sutra case was reported to have been excavated from Yukihashi, Fukuoka prefecture, the prefecture

from which the greatest number of Fujiwara-period sutra containers have been recovered.<sup>7</sup>

The second, rather robust and cylindrical case is an example of the most popular type of case found in northern Kyūshū district, regarded by some scholars as indigenous to this region.<sup>8</sup> It stands on a double base, the lower part of which forms graceful trefoils. It is topped by a large, umbrella-shaped cap with upturned rim. The strong, sturdy tube is ringed by finely chiseled threads at regular intervals. In its proportion and shape, this case resembles many others from the first half of the twelfth century, which were recovered from northern Kyūshū, and it may be dated about the same time as the hexagon-shaped one, or slightly later. The gilding is no longer discernible; in its place, bright pink patina spots have appeared, creating a charming contrast to the otherwise dark green surface.

1. For the excavation of these mounds, see Yajima Kyōsuke, "Kyōzuka," *Bukkyō Kōkōgaku Kōza*, I (Tokyo, 1971), pp. 144–146.
2. Hosaka Saburō, *Kyōzuka Ron (A Study of Kyōzuka, Sūtra Mounds)* (Tokyo, 1971), pp. 54 ff.
3. A detailed account of this event is engraved on the outside of the sutra cases, and it is also recorded in Michinaga's diary, the *Midō Kampaku Ki*, Yosano Hiroshi, ed., *Nihon Koten Zenshū*, vol. XXII (Tokyo, 1926), pp. 151–153; Ishida Mosaku and Yajima Kyōsuke, *Kimbusen Kyōzuka Ibutsu no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1937).
4. Yajima, "Kyōzuka," pp. 162–163.
5. See the list of dated sutra cases, *ibid.*, pp. 153–160.
6. Umehara Sueji, "Taiji Ninen no Kyōzutsu," *Shiseki to Bijutsu* 343 (April 1964), p. 92.
7. *Ibid.*; Oda Fujio, "Sūtra Mounds in Kyūshū," *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 76 (July 1970), p. 139.
8. Oda, "Sūtra Mounds," pp. 133–144.

Chapter 78 of the *Dai Han'nya Baramita Kyō* (*The Greater Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom*)

Fujiwara period (twelfth century)

Gold and silver on indigo paper

H. 25.9 cm (10 $\frac{3}{16}$  in.); frontispiece, W. 21.3 cm (8 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.)

The drawing of this frontispiece conforms to a very popular type of composition hand-copied on hundreds of sutras during the Fujiwara period. The majority of these were reproduced on deep indigo paper, their texts written in silver ink, and their frontispiece drawings executed in gold and silver ink. As in many other painted frontispieces of such sutras, a bird-shaped hill, the Vulture Peak near Rājagriha in India, looms in the distance, setting the stage for Shākyamuni's sermons (Shaka, in Japanese). The Buddha is seated on a tall lotus pedestal in the center, flanked by Bodhisattvas and monks. In front of him is a tall offering table, on which an incense burner is placed. Four more monks and three noblemen are seated facing the Buddha.

This scroll is the seventy-eighth chapter of the *Dai Han'nya Baramita Kyō* (*Dai Han'nya Kyō*, for short),<sup>1</sup> known in Sanskrit as *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, the *Greater Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom*; it is the opening sutra in the Chinese *Tripitaka*, a compendium of Buddhist scriptures. It is one of the most important canonical sources for Mahāyānists and contains metaphysical discourses given by the Buddha at sixteen different meetings. Throughout the long sermon, absolute truth is equated to void or emptiness, and wisdom is praised as the best means of reaching enlightenment. The chapter shown here belongs to section two of part twenty-two from the first sermon, in which the Buddha answers a series of questions put forth by kings in search of truth and enlightenment.

A short version of the *Dai Han'nya Kyō* was translated into Chinese in the early fifth century, but a full translation, consisting of six hundred scrolls, was made

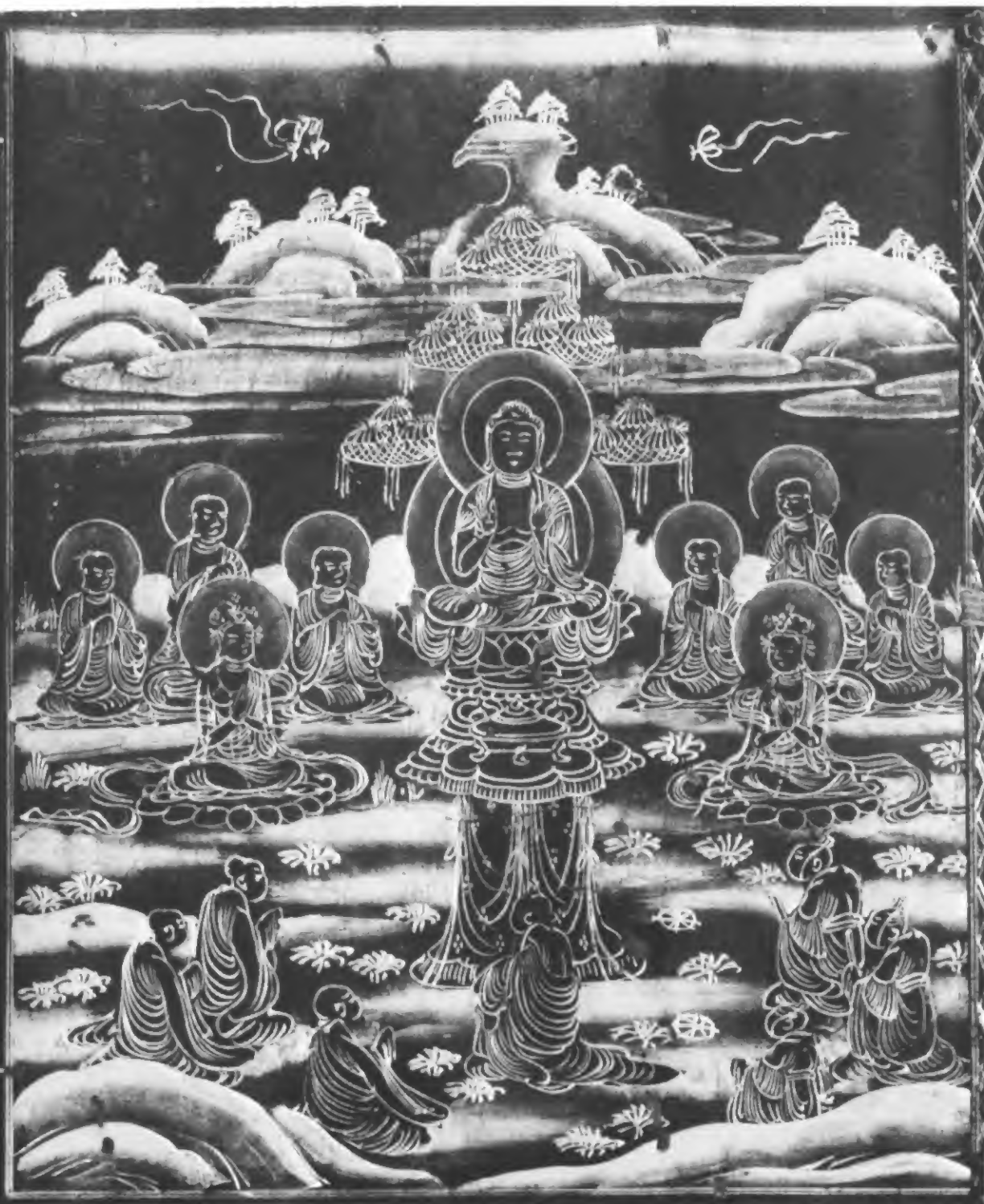
by the famous Chinese monk Hsüan-tsang (596–664) between 659 and 663. This sutra was introduced to Japan soon afterwards, where the earliest known Japanese copy dates from 712. Subsequently, it was frequently copied by Japanese Buddhists, especially as a part of the liturgy dedicated to the prayers for protection of the nation against evil forces. The overwhelming amount of work involved in hand-copying this set was never a deterrent. Indeed, the idea of such a laborious task was appealing, as there were always religious merits to be gained by the patient act of copying many sutras. Reproducing scrolls in enormous quantities became especially fashionable in the twelfth century. The deep veneration for this activity is exemplified by the famous twelfth-century set at Chūsonji of Hiraizumi in northern Japan, part of which is now at Kongōbuji, Mount Kōya. Frontispiece drawings of the Chūsonji sutras are executed, like this one, in gold and silver on indigo paper. Although their relationship to the content of the text is not always clear, some scrolls from this set depict dramatic narrative scenes. Nevertheless, a majority of the Chūsonji frontispieces and many others of the gold-and-silver-against-blue type resemble this *Dai Han'nya Kyō*. Their compositions are strongly hieratic: Buddha seated under the Vulture Peak, occupying the center of the composition and surrounded by Bodhisattvas and other members of his audience. Traditional uniformity also occurs in the style of decorations of the frontispieces of these sutras. Figures of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, monks, and devotees alike have the appearance of charming, innocent children. Quick, uniform brushstrokes define essential details of the human figures; round, gentle hills and mountains are delineated quickly in broad bands of gold and silver. The drawing is, in every respect, a typical example of decorated sutras from the twelfth century.

1. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. V, no. 220, pp. 436–441. A detailed discussion of the contents of this sutra is in John Rosenfield and Shūjirō Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art: Selections from the Kimiko and John Powers Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), pp. 80–81.



大般若波羅蜜多經卷第七十八  
初八天帝品第廿二之二

三藏法師玄奘奉  
詔譯





## II

### A Scroll from the So-called “Jingoji Sutra”

Fujiwara period (last half of the twelfth century)

Gold and silver on indigo paper

H. 25.6 cm (10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.); frontispiece, W. 21.8 cm  
(8<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SEAL: “Jingoji”

EX COLLECTION: Jingoji, Kyoto

Designs on the cover and on the frontispiece of this sutra closely resemble those on the *Dai Han'nya Kyō* (no. 10), but it is simpler; it represents the Buddha, flanked only by two monks and two Bodhisattvas, giving the sermon at Vulture Peak. A rectangular red seal of Jingoji, Kyoto, has been placed between the frontispiece and the first line of the text. This was separated from a large set of the compendium of sutras called *Tripitaka*, at Jingoji, which is commonly known as the “Jingoji Sutra.” According to the *Jingoji Ryaku Ki*, a history of Jingoji,<sup>1</sup> this *Tripitaka* was started by the retired emperor Toba just before his death in 1156 and was completed in 1185 by his son, Goshirakawa, who lived at this temple after his abdication from the throne in 1158. The original set must have included about five thousand scrolls, since the temple inventory of 1794 reports 4,722 still remaining there.<sup>2</sup> In the nineteenth century, however, some were stolen, and still more

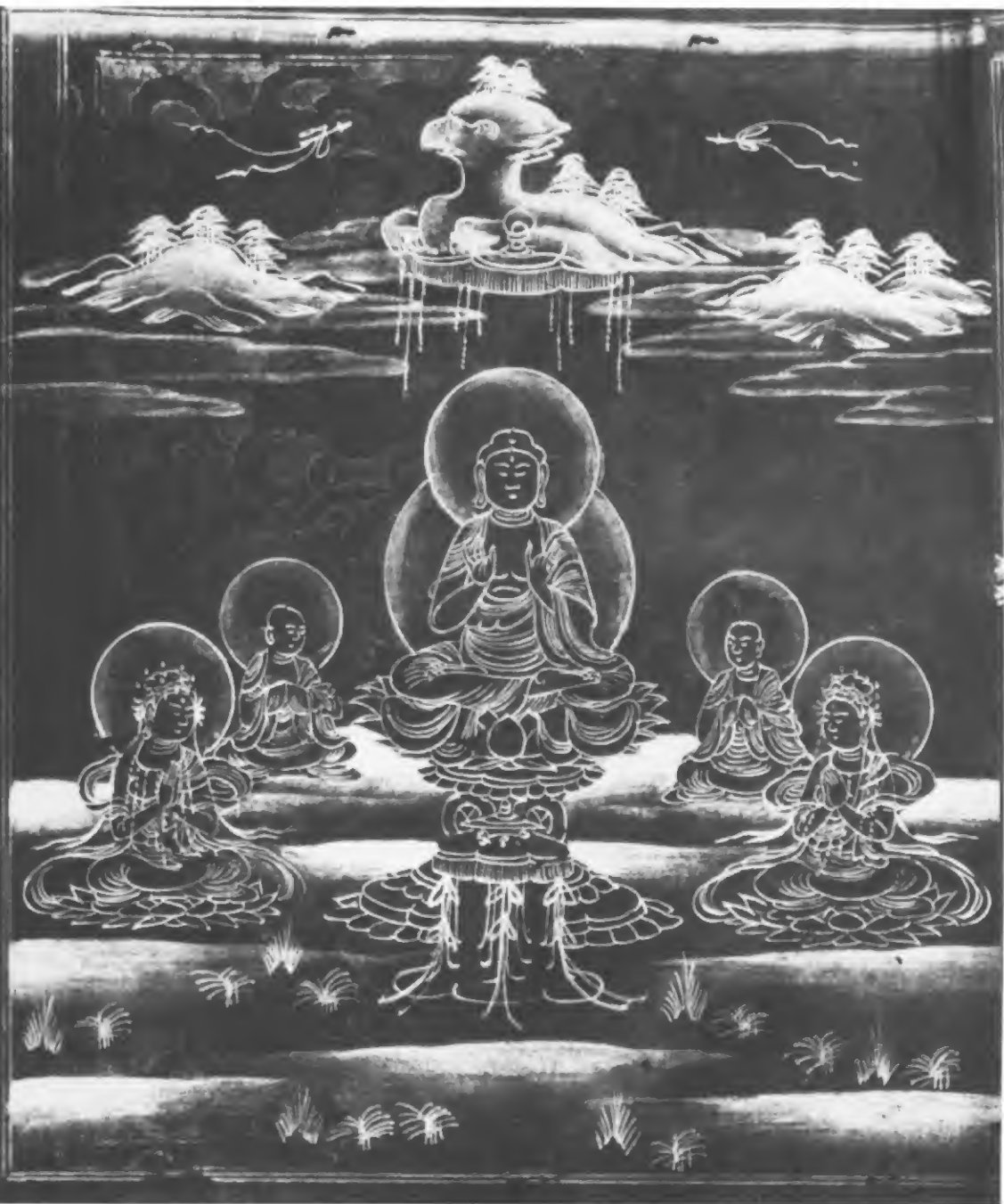
were sold to finance repairs of temple buildings, so that only 2,273 scrolls remain at the temple today.

The present scroll is a complete translation of the *Dai Hōkō Butsu Kegon Kyō Shūji Bun*,<sup>3</sup> which was translated into Chinese in 692 by a Central Asian monk from Khotan, who was known in China by his adopted Chinese name of T'ien-chih. In this sutra, Buddha gives a sermon in answer to the question asked by Bodhisattva Maitreya (Miroku Bosatsu), who, with many other Bodhisattvas, followed Buddha to the Vulture Peak. Buddha describes the six ways (*Sat-pāramitā*), such as charity and purity of mind and deed, with which the Bodhisattvas should conduct their lives in order to achieve enlightenment.

Like many others from the Jingoji set, the frontispiece of this sutra portrays only the simple, hieratic scene of Buddha and his listeners, a style popular in the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods. This representation contrasts with many of the sutras in the equally famous set in Chūsonji, which depict dramatic narrative scenes.

1. Bussho Kankō-kai, ed., *Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho: Jishi Sōsho*, III (Tokyo, 1915), p. 115; John Rosenfield and Shūjirō Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art: Selections from the Kimiko and John Powers Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), no. 33.
2. Tanaka Kaidō, *Ko Shakyō Sōkan* (Nara, 1942), p. 355.
3. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. X, no. 306, p. 959.

大方廣佛華嚴經後慈分一卷  
三藏法師提雲後奉制譯  
如是我聞一時佛在王舍城鷲峯山中與  
元量大菩薩衆俱於勒菩薩摩訶薩而爲



## Scene of Temptation from the *Kako Genzai Inga Kyō* (*Sutra of Cause and Effect*)

Kamakura period (last half of the thirteenth century)

Handscroll; color on paper

W. 156.4 x H. 27.7 cm (61 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 10 $\frac{15}{16}$  in.)

EX COLLECTIONS: Setsuda; Matsunaga Yasuzaemon, Tokyo

PUBLISHED: Maruyama Masatake, ed., *Kanshō Bijutsu* (Tokyo, 1973), pp. 144–147; Takada Osamu and Yanagisawa Taka, *Butsuga*, Genshoku Nihon no Bijutsu, vol. VII (Tokyo, 1969), fig. 42; Tanaka Ichimatsu, "Illustrated *Inga-kyō Sūtra*," *Kokka* 881 (August 1965), p. 24; Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *E Inga Kyō*, Nihon Emakimono Zenshū, vol. XVI (Tokyo, 1959).

The *Kako Genzai Inga Kyō* (*Sutra of Cause and Effect*), also known by its abbreviated title *Inga Kyō*, is generally believed to have been composed in India in the third century A.D.<sup>1</sup> The sutra is in the form of a story told by the Buddha in answer to questions of his followers. He describes his experiences: his former incarnation as Sumedha (Zen'ne Sen'nin, in Japanese), his life as the young prince Siddhartha, and finally his

enlightenment. He closes the discourse by explaining that one's present life is inevitably affected by past deeds and that one's future is determined by present actions.

The Chinese translation of the sutra is attributed to the Indian monk Gunabhadra, who may have completed it in the first half of the fifth century. When the sutra was first translated into Chinese, it apparently consisted of four or five handscrolls of text. When illustrations were added, they were placed on the upper half of the scroll above the text, allowing both pictures and text to flow together from right to left. Thus, illustrated versions of the *Inga Kyō* usually had eight scrolls or sometimes ten. This arrangement had achieved popularity by T'ang times, and a number of T'ang-dynasty Buddhist scrolls and books with the same arrangement of pictures and text were recovered from the Tunhuang caves in northwest China.

Many copies of the *Inga Kyō*, with and without illustrations, were made in Japan during the eighth century. The oldest extant examples of the illustrated version are divided among Japanese and American collections, notably pieces belonging to the Jōbon Rendaiji in Kyoto; Hōon-in, a subtemple of Daigoji; and the Atami Museum. None of the eighth-century works are from the same set but were painted at different times by different hands. In addition to the Nara-period scrolls,



two Heian versions, dating to the early ninth century, also exist.

The *Inga Kyō* seems to have fallen into disuse after the ninth century, when Esoteric Buddhist faiths and the worship of Amida, the Savior of the Western Paradise, dominated Japanese Buddhism. During the Kamakura period, however, interest in the *Inga Kyō* was revived, and a number of new versions were produced. Although stimulated in part by the efforts of some temples to restore faith in the historical Buddha, Shaka, the reappearance of the *Inga Kyō* is another example of the most important artistic trend of the period, the revival of classical traditions. Just as the art of Unkei and his followers was greatly influenced by sculpture of the Asuka and Nara periods, priest-artists and patrons of the Kamakura period reconsidered the *Inga Kyō* with fresh appreciation.

The earliest known Kamakura version of the *Inga Kyō* is dated to 1254, and another copy was made before the end of the thirteenth century. This late thirteenth-century version, known only in a few fragments of the fifth scroll, once belonged to the Matsunaga collection, but these pieces are now in several different collections. The large fragment here is one of them.<sup>2</sup> A third, slightly later version, which has also been cut apart and scattered among collectors, once belonged to Shōriji in Nagoya.

Our fragment illustrates the temptation of Prince Siddhartha. In this fantastic scene the demon king,

Mara, and an army of his men try to distract the prince from his meditation. Mara, seated to the right at the beginning of the scroll, directs the operation. An array of weapon-wielding demonic figures, many of them composite creatures of various weird and terrifying beasts, converge on him. Two young sisters of Mara appear, bearing skulls, which are the source of disturbing phenomena. They try to frighten the prince, not only with their grotesque faces and terrible weapons, but by creating storms, earthquakes, fires, floods, and tornadoes. The supernatural power of the prince, however, repels all threats: huge boulders meant to be thrown at him will not move; flying swords and arrows are arrested in midair; thunder, lightning, rain, and fire are transformed into multicolored flowers; the poisonous breath of dragons becomes a fragrant breeze. In the midst of mayhem the prince sits unperturbed until a heavenly voice in the sky announces that Mara is defeated and that the demons must disperse immediately, because the prince will attain enlightenment.

Both the eighth-century fragment of the illustrated *Inga Kyō* owned by the Hōon-in of Daigoji and a ninth-century version in the Masuda collection preserve the same temptation scene, and the two versions are very much alike. Similarly, since the late-Kamakura Shōriji version of this scene is extremely close to this fragment from the Matsunaga version, it is possible that the Shōriji scroll was either copied from the Matsunaga version or that both descended from a common







大烟塵暗元所見四  
 大海水一時涌沸漲  
 法天人諸龍鬼等悉  
 忿魔衆瞋恚增威毛  
 孔血流淨居天衆見  
 此惡魔惱亂菩薩以  
 慈悲心而忍傷之於  
 是來下側塞虛空見  
 魔軍衆元量元邊圍  
 繞菩薩發大惡聲震  
 動天地菩薩心定願  
 異相猶如師子亂於  
 底羣皆悉歎言嗚呼  
 奇哉未曾有也菩薩  
 決定當成正覺是諸  
 魔衆互相催切各盡  
 威力摧破菩薩或角  
 目切齒或橫飛亂擲

model. The model, in turn, was probably made earlier in the Kamakura period following a work from the Nara or Heian periods. Since the Hōon-in and Masuda versions are stylistically close, it is difficult to determine which one might have been the prototype for Kamakura-period copies. Moreover, the two Kamakura copies, while basically similar in composition to the Hōon-in and Masuda, share common modifications that distinguish them from the two earlier scrolls.

In the eighth- and ninth-century scrolls, tall hills or buildings, regularly placed at either end of a scene, are used to separate the episodes, providing a stagelike setting for human figures. Most Kamakura scrolls are free of these devices, allowing a continuous flow of events from right to left. A certain vitality of style also distinguishes the illustrated *Inga Kyō* of the Kamakura period. The scene of temptation, as on the fragment

here, the most theatrical and action-filled scene in the entire sutra, is more dramatic in the Kamakura depictions, and the devils and demons look much more grotesque. Instead of carefully drawn lines, the brushwork is sure and quick, and the colors sometimes extend beyond their inked boundaries. In this scroll, spontaneity, raw energy, and motion—the vital elements of the art of this period—are translated into a colorful visual form.

1. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. III, no. 189; Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *E Inga Kyō*, Nihon Emakimono Zenshū, vol. XVI (Tokyo, 1959), p. 13.
2. Two fragments from this version are in the Powers collection. See John Rosenfield and Shūjirō Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art: Selections from the Kimiko and John Powers Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), nos. 42, 43.

## Scenes from Chapters 12 and 14 of the *Lotus Sutra*

Edo period (about 1667)

Gold and silver on paper

H. 27.8 cm (10<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.); frontispiece, W. 29.2 cm (11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.)

The covers of these two unusually delicate and elegant scrolls of the *Lotus Sutra* have designs of tripartite hollyhock leaves, the family crest of the Tokugawa shogun. The scrolls are linked by tradition to the members of the imperial family and Tokugawa shoguns.<sup>1</sup> A brief statement that accompanies the scroll of chapter 12 reports that, during a repair a few years ago, the roller at the end was removed, revealing an inscription of 1667. Unfortunately, the roller was placed back in its original position after the repair, again concealing the inscription from our view. In addition to the two scrolls in the Burke collection, a few more scrolls from the same set are known to be in American collections.<sup>2</sup>

Each of twenty-eight chapters of the *Lotus Sutra* in this set is written on one scroll; and each frontispiece has a delicate miniature executed carefully in ink and gold. A different color but identical design is used on the silken cover of every scroll; for example, the cover of chapter 12 is brown, while that of chapter 14 is light blue. Margins above and below the text are beautifully decorated with designs stenciled in gold, silver, and various colors. So far as can be determined, all the frontispiece paintings seem to have been executed by one painter, but the texts may have been written by many calligraphers.

The frontispiece of the scroll of chapter 12 illustrates several episodes told in this chapter.<sup>3</sup> A famous episode relates the story of a Buddha who was a king in one of his many incarnations: he went to the mountains seeking the true Law and met there a hermit seer, who promised to impart this knowledge if the king became his servant. The king agreed and provided for the hermit's daily needs by collecting fuel, water, fruit, and

other necessities. At night he offered his body as the seer's seat and bed. A millennium passed in this way, and at last, the king became a Buddha. In the upper left of the painting is the youthful king, dressed as a humble servant, carrying bales of fodder on his shoulders. Seated in a cave, the seer scrutinizes the king's labor. Illustrated in the lower section of this panel is another famous episode from the same chapter. A youthful-looking Bodhisattva Manjushri (Monju Bosatsu, in Japanese), with his hair tied into five knots of wisdom, stands over ocean waves, gazing intently at a small girl. This scene illustrates Monju's discourse about an eight-year-old daughter of the Dragon King Sagara, who, in a few moments, became perfectly enlightened, in spite of her youth and sex. She sprang up from the sea and transformed herself into a Buddha before a great multitude of witnesses, who rejoiced and made reverent salutations.

Chapter 14 describes a practical and often militant attitude of the Buddhist church: its activity of proselytizing by means of the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>4</sup> In the center of this frontispiece painting is a scene of the discourse between the Buddha and Monju, but the basic tenet of this chapter is expressed in a fighting scene at the upper right. There, the king of the army riding astride his horse watches his men fight fiercely against his enemy. He is likened to a king who commands a large army of men. He desires to conquer other domains by force and also handsomely rewards the bravery of his men with many jewels, horses, carriages, slaves, houses, and cities.

Among the numerous Buddhist sutras, perhaps none in the Far East matches the popularity and long-lasting influence of the *Myōhō Renge-kyō* (*Hokekyō*, for short), the *Lotus of the Wonderful Law*. Known also by its Sanskrit name, *Saddharma Pundarīka*, it is surely the most famous Buddhist scripture in the West, where it is sometimes considered one of three most important religious books in the world. It is generally assumed that the *Lotus Sutra* was written and promulgated in India sometime in the first century A.D. Throughout its text, the *Lotus Sutra* promises the salvation of all sentient beings who believe in it and assures that the mere invocation of the names of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas





## Chapter 12

leads them to salvation. Its adherents regard the *Lotus* as Shaka's final bequest to this world, the supreme and most sublime of sutras.

The oldest extant *Lotus Sutra* in Chinese translation was completed by an Indian missionary, Dharmaraksa, in 286 A.D., but two earlier translations once existed. The Chinese translation, which became the source for all later Chinese and Japanese copies, was the fifth at-

tempt at the difficult task of setting the foreign text into Chinese. This was accomplished around 406 A.D. by the famous missionary Kumārajīva (344-423?), who lived in Ch'ang-an in northwest China. As far as can be determined from extant examples, only a few isolated episodes from the *Lotus* were represented in Chinese art before the T'ang dynasty, but these few episodes appear with amazing regularity.<sup>5</sup> LeRoy Davidson, in his

study of the *Lotus Sutra* in Chinese arts, notes that the sutra's influence diminished in the late T'ang dynasty, except at Tun-huang.<sup>6</sup> This seems to be quite true in sculpture, but the subject gained popularity in painting just at that time. It may be that the Chinese realized that painting is a more congenial medium for the rep-

resentation of dramatic narratives, a feature that distinguishes the *Lotus* from other scriptures. Literary records refer to many T'ang paintings illustrating stories from this sutra, but the paintings are now lost. A number of wall paintings and scrolls that depict many episodes from various chapters of this sutra are

#### Chapter 14







*Detail of Chapter 12*

at Tun-huang. These clearly demonstrate that more episodes than ever before were then selected for illumination; in fact, a fairly standardized cycle of narratives must have existed before the sutra was illustrated at Tun-huang. In the Tun-huang paintings, major theological points of each chapter of the sutra were illuminated by a set of scenes, and with uniform compositions. A standard canon of the *Lotus* illumination had probably developed sometime before the T'ang dynasty.

Worship of the *Lotus Sutra* is mentioned in Japan's historical record as early as the late sixth century, and it not only laid the foundation for the later develop-

ment of Japanese Buddhism, but helped to shape the underlying force of Japanese culture in later periods. Even during the height of Esoteric Buddhism in the Early Heian period, the *Lotus Sutra* was one of few non-Esoteric sutras to remain influential. Its overwhelming control over Japanese Buddhists is perhaps best evidenced in the militant devotion to this scripture by priest Nichiren (1222-1282), who declared that only the *Lotus* could offer salvation at the inevitable "end of the world."

There are only a few isolated examples of the *Lotus* pictures dating before the Fujiwara period. Both the documentary references and the extant examples of

*Lotus* pictures increase suddenly in the Fujiwara period, perhaps reflecting a general preference for narrative paintings. Records describe now-lost wall paintings of this sutra, which decorated temple interiors.<sup>7</sup> Most of the extant *Lotus* pictures from this period, however, are small frontispiece decorations of the *Lotus Sutra* scrolls; sometimes even frontispieces of the sutras unrelated to the *Lotus*. Among the earliest extant pictures illustrating *Lotus* stories are a set of sutra scrolls in Enryakuji at Mount Hiei; some scrolls from the so-called Chūsonji sutras at Chūsonji, Iwate prefecture; and, the most famous of all, the so-called *Heike Nōkyō* at Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima. In these sutras, the arts of writing, paintings, paper decoration, metalwork, and textile design, were brought together to create a spiritual beauty, truly appropriate for a sutra called the *Lotus of the Wonderful Law*.

The *Lotus* scrolls included here continue the courtly tradition of the Fujiwara period. Fabrics of the cover, woven silken cords used to tie the rolled-up scrolls, metal fittings to which the cords are attached, and metal caps protecting the ends of the rollers all contribute to the beauty of this sutra. The frontispiece paintings of the *Lotus*, made in the Edo period, belong to a different pictorial tradition. The *Lotus* pictures on the sutras from the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods may be roughly divided into two major types. The first type has drawings in gold and silver, executed on blue or purple paper. Most have a strong hieratic composition, emphasizing large figures of Buddha and Bodhisattvas in the center of the frontispiece. In this respect, they are similar to the frontispiece pictures nos. 10 and 11. Narrative scenes play only minor roles in these paintings, and when they are included, only one or two of the most popular episodes are shown. A second group is polychrome paintings, which are typified by the *Heike Nōkyō*. Narrative scenes dominate these compositions, and, in some instances, the Buddha groups are completely eliminated. In these frontispieces from the Edo period, however, hieratic and narrative scenes are evenly balanced. Scenes of the dialogue between the Buddha and Bodhisattvas are always represented, but they never dominate the composition. The remaining area of the frontispiece is divided into small cells to accommodate a larger cycle of narrative scenes than

usually found on Fujiwara-period frontispieces. The Edo-period frontispieces closely resemble Chinese and Korean sutra illustrations from the late thirteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

An unusual feature in these scrolls is that a kind of horror vacui seems to have inspired the background. Small, geometric textilelike patterns completely fill the space not occupied by figures in the manner of Korean sutra decorations, some of which are executed in gold on blue-purple paper. Many examples of this type of Korean and Chinese sutra are found in Japanese collections: perhaps they were used by the artist of these frontispieces as his model. The drawings are attributed to Tosa Mitsuoki (1617–1691), although without documentary evidence.<sup>9</sup> Mitsuoki, the leader of the Tosa school in the seventeenth century, specialized in delicate paintings of the flowers-and-birds genre. His figure paintings, however, are usually rather stiff and cold, lacking the naivete and charm that characterize these works.

1. John Rosenfield et al., *The Courtly Tradition in Japanese Art and Literature: Selections from the Hofer and Hyde Collections* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), no. 24.
2. For chapter 27 from this set, see *ibid.*
3. There are many English translations of this sutra. The most popular are: William Soothill, trans., *The Lotus of the Wonderful Law or the Lotus Gospel (Saddharma Pundarika Sūtra, Miao-fa Lien Hua Ching)* (Oxford, 1930); and Bunnō Katō, trans., *Myōhō-enge-kyō: The Sūtra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law* (Tokyo, 1971). For this episode, see *ibid.*, pp. 251–261.
4. Katō, *Myōhō-enge-kyō*, pp. 269–90.
5. Mizuno Seiichi and Nagahiro Toshio, *Yün-kang: The Buddhist Cave-temples of the Fifth Century A.D. in North China* (Kyoto, 1951–1956), XII. For the earlier examples of *Lotus* representations, see LeRoy Davidson, *The Lotus Sūtra in Chinese Art: A Study in Buddhist Art to the Year 1000* (New Haven, 1954).
6. Davidson, *The Lotus Sūtra*, p. 75.
7. A good summary of the literary references to the lost wall paintings of this sutra is in Miya Tsugio, “The Hokke Mandara Owned by Danzan Jinja, III,” *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 223 (July 1962), pp. 56–57.
8. Kanda Kiichirō, “The Avatamsaka Sūtra Dated 1291,” *Bijutsu Shi* 40 (March 1961), pl. II-d.
9. Rosenfield et al., *The Courtly Tradition*, no. 24.

## A Page from the *Kontai Butsuga Jō*

Fujiwara period

Attributed to Takuma Tametō (active, 1131–1174)

Originally a book, now remounted as a hanging scroll,  
color on paper

H. 25 x W. 12.8 cm (5 $\frac{1}{16}$  x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$  in.)

PUBLISHED: Ōmura Seigai, ed., *Bukkyō Zuzō Shūko*  
(Tokyo, 1921).

A serene Bodhisattva, wearing an elaborate golden crown, sits on a large lotus pedestal in relaxed posture. His body is light pink. His left hand, in a loose fist, rests on his thigh; in his right hand he holds the attribute of the lightning bolt, or *vajra*, attached to a long staff, which is placed erect on a smaller lotus pedestal in front of him. Long scarves are draped loosely over his left shoulder and around his torso, their ends fluttering behind his arms. His long legs, draped by a red and green skirt, are folded to form a wide base for this dignified and elegant deity. His name, Dai Shōjin Bosatsu, is written on the right side, and his secret name, Futai Kongō, on the left. The word “Sam’maiya-gyō” (meaning, “attribute”) and Bosatsu’s “seed” letter, which signifies his nature and function, are written on either side of the *vajra*.

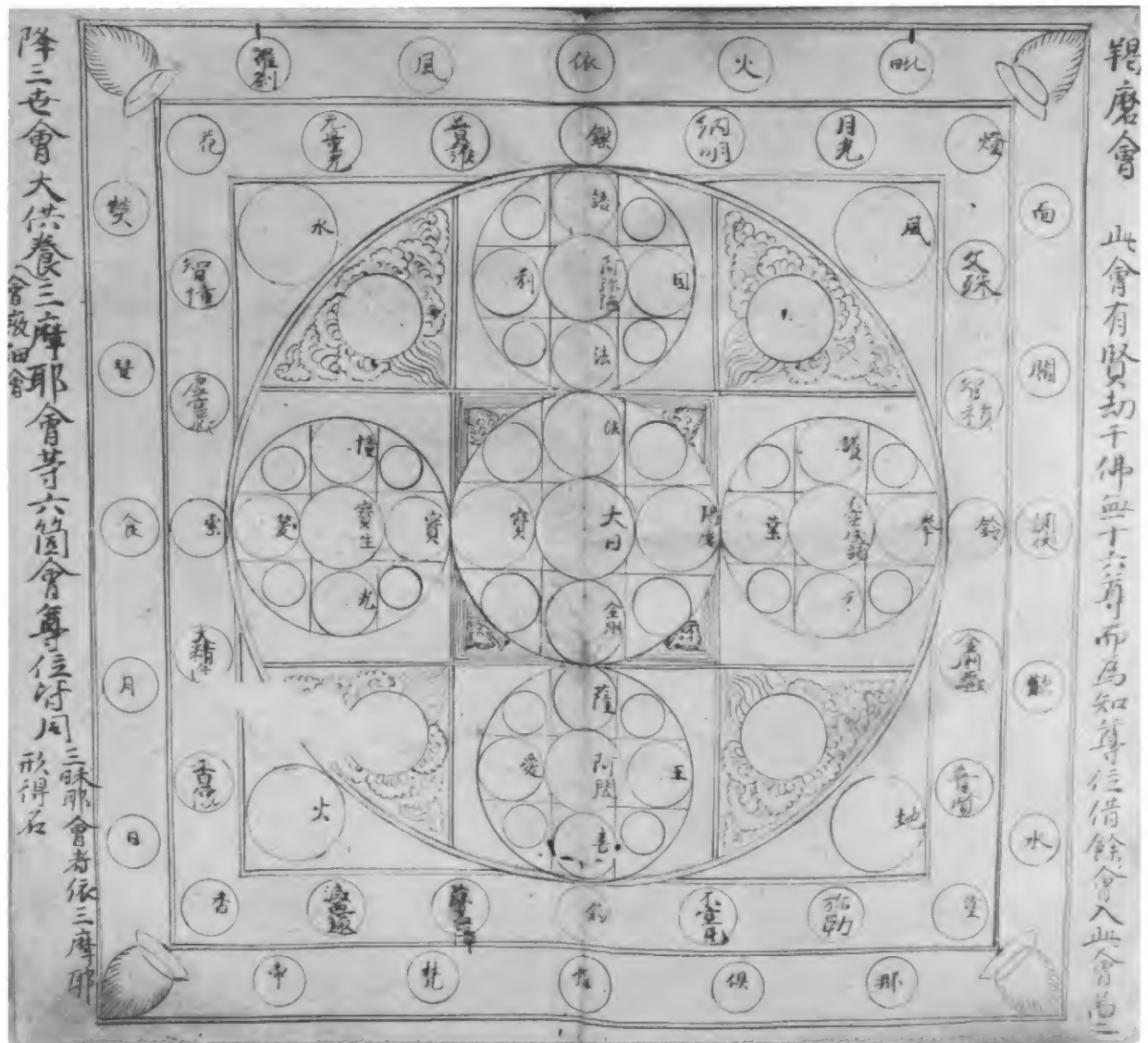
This small painting, which is now surmounted on the back of an old, unrelated sutra, once belonged to an unusual book, a collection of drawings representing Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who constitute the Kongōkai Mandala (Diamond Mandala), one of two most important mandalas of the Shingon sect. The book, commonly known as the *Kontai Butsuga Jō* (*Book of Buddhist Deities from the Kongōkai and Taizōkai Mandalas*), had an extraordinary history, which is still fresh in the memories of some senior historians of art in Japan. According to a vivid and personal account given by Professor Tanaka Ichimatsu,<sup>1</sup> a small but complete book, consisting of some 112 pages of drawings and text, was “discovered” in 1927 at Ganjōji, Kumamoto prefecture in Kyūshū Island. Actually, the entire book had been fairly well known before that time, since its

facsimile was published with a commentary by Ōmura Seigai in 1921.<sup>2</sup> From the moment of its so-called discovery, however, the book was doomed to be fragmented, the fate of many narrative scroll-paintings. Its pages were cut apart and distributed among various collections before 1929, when the government issued more stringent restrictions on the preservation of art treasures. Twelve pages are now in the Yamato Bunkakan in Nara; fifteen pages from the beginning of the book and three from the end, which were in the Mutō collection, are now in the collection of Kososhi Bun-kichi, Kyoto. The fragment here adds one more to at least five leaves already in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

In its original arrangement, the beginning of the book showed five schematic diagrams which marked the general layout of the Diamond Mandala; these were followed by a brief description of this mandala and the figures of ninety-five deities. With the exception of the last twenty-two figures, each deity is accompanied by an inscription with his name, a secret name, a “seed” letter, and the attribute. In addition, notations for the first thirty-eight figures cite the colors of their bodies, their mudra, and their Sanskrit names.

The fragment in the Burke collection represents the forty-third figure, Dai Shōjin Bosatsu (Sauraya Bodhisattva, in Sanskrit), who is also known as Yūmō Bosatsu. All of his variant names refer to his firm, unswerving faith. He is one of sixteen guardian deities of the Diamond Mandala, known as the Gengō Jūroku Son, and his position in the mandala is indicated in the diagram on page 6 of the book (see ill. opposite).

At the end of the book were three inscriptions: the earliest one, now in the Kososhi collection, is dated to the fifteenth day of the first month, the twenty-seventh year of the Ōei era (1420). According to this inscription, the book was given to a monk named Kōshin by another priest, Chōson, a transaction that took place at the northern dormitory of Kōdai-in at Mount Kōya, the headquarters of Shingon Buddhism. The second inscription was written in the seventh month, the fifth year of the Kyōroku era (1532) by Shinson, the eighth abbot of Ganjōji in Kyūshū. It also furnishes the title of the book, “*Kontai Butsuga Jō*,” and attributes its author-



Page 6 of the Kontai Butsuga Jō. The position of Dai Shōjin Bosatsu is indicated by the third circle from the bottom, in the second column of circles from the left. Kososki Bunkichi collection

ship to Takuma Tametō, a famous Buddhist painter of the twelfth century. The third inscription, dated to the third month of the sixteenth year of the Kan'ei era (1639), simply states that by a “miraculous connection,” the book came into the possession of Gyōshin, sixteenth abbot of Ganjōji, where the book had remained for almost three hundred years.

In a long commentary attached to the facsimile reproduction of the book, Ōmura Seigai states that the second inscription was not originally in the book, but

that he discovered it himself among massive temple records preserved at Ganjōji. On the basis of the calligraphy, however, Tanaka argues that this is a modern copy of the sixteenth-century inscription and that its contents are authentic. Several facts suggest that there may indeed have been a “miraculous connection” between the temples of Mount Kōya and Ganjōji. Most obvious, the name Shinson represents a composite of the last parts of Kōshin and Chōson, the monks mentioned in the first inscription, and, secondly, the sub-

temple Dai Dempō-in at Mount Kōya once contained mandala paintings made on pillars in 1131 by Tametō, who is named in the second inscription. The temple's founder, Kakuban (d. 1143), was a scholarly reformer who was believed to have established, in 1140, the small temple in Wakayama near Mount Kōya that later expanded to the establishment known as Negoro-dera. Negoro-dera maintained a close tie with Dai Dempō-in long after Kakuban's death, as well as with the temple Ganjōji, founded in 1233, which was apparently under the theological umbrella of the Dai Dempo-in group. After the general Toyotomi Hideyoshi destroyed Negoro-dera in 1585, one of its high-ranking monks, Seishin, escaped to Ganjōji with some temple treasures and important sutras, eventually becoming Ganjōji's thirteenth abbot. If the date of the second inscription is considered accurate, Seishin's move to Ganjōji would have been too late for the transfer of the *Kontai Butsuga Jō* to Kyūshū, but it suggests that earlier monks from the temples of Mount Kōya might have made the same journey.

While the accuracy of the attribution to Takuma Tametō would seem to rest on the validity of the second inscription, stylistic evidence does suggest that the paintings were executed by a professional twelfth-century Buddhist painter. The full oblong faces of the Bodhisattvas, their long torsos, their relaxed positions on wide bases formed by their long legs, the smoothly flowing ink outlines, and the brightly colored personal ornaments of the deities are all characteristic of twelfth-century Buddhist works. There is, however, no painting that can be even remotely connected with Tametō, although he is mentioned on various texts on paintings and painters.<sup>4</sup>

The book's title, which is mentioned for the first time in the 1532 inscription, suggests that the *Kontai Butsuga Jō* might have been a part of a larger set repre-

senting two mandalas, Kongōkai and Taizōkai (Womb Mandala), which are usually made as a pair. In fact, Ōmura included in his facsimile edition a set of two small books with representations of deities from the Womb Mandala. Tanaka also reports that he saw this book in 1924, but that its present whereabouts are unknown. Tanaka's recollection, after nearly fifty years, is rather sketchy, but he believes that the books of Kongōkai and Taizōkai were about the same size.<sup>5</sup> The schematic formats of the deities are identical in the two books, and, according to Tanaka, the drawings in Taizōkai and Kongōkai are stylistically of the same period, if not by the same artist. Iconographically, the deities depicted in these two sets of mandalas complement each other. Thus, Naitō Tōichirō, in his discussion on Amida Buddha, reproduced drawings of this Buddha as they appear in the Kongōkai and Taizōkai books, treating them as a pair.<sup>6</sup>

Among the hundreds of drawings made for iconographic studies, the *Kontai Butsuga Jō* is truly unique. Its pictures are not drawings in the usual sense, that is, hasty sketches in ink monochrome, like most others made by monks as notes and memos for their personal use. They are finished paintings, and they are important examples of Buddhist paintings of the late Fujiwara period.

1. Tanaka Ichimatsu, "Kontai Butsuga Jō to Takuma Tametō," *Yamato Bunka* 12 (December 1953), pp. 22-27.
2. Ōmura Seigai, ed., *Bukkyō Zuzō Shūko* (Tokyo, 1921).
3. Four of these are reproduced in John Rosenfield, *Japanese Arts of the Heian Period: 794-1185* (New York, 1967), no. 5.
4. Tanaka Ichimatsu, *Nihon Kaiga-shi Ronshū* (Tokyo, 1966), pp. 114-115.
5. Tanaka, *Nihon Kaiga-shi*, p. 109.
6. Naitō Tōichirō, *Nihon Bukkyō Zuzō Shi* (Tokyo, 1932), fig. 21.



大精進并

不退金剛



三昧耶形

種子



*Raigō* (Descent of Amida Buddha)

Last half of the fourteenth century

Color and gold on silk

H. 102 x W. 40.1 cm (40<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)



Through the dark blue sky, a large figure of golden Amida, Lord of the Western Paradise, also known as the Buddha of Immeasurable Light, floats effortlessly on a silver cloud.<sup>1</sup> From a faint aureole of gold directly behind his head, straight gold lines radiate as if reaching beyond the frame of the painting. With his hands, Amida forms the mudra of *jōbon geshō* (bottom level in the first class), one of nine possible degrees of welcome extended to devotees. He is preceded by two small figures of Bodhisattvas. To our right, leaning slightly forward, a Bosatsu holds a small golden lotus pedestal, from which delicate golden beads hang and sway in the wind like young willow branches. A miniature Buddha image is depicted on the front of his crown. These elements help to identify this figure as Avalokiteshvara (Kannon, in Japanese), the most compassionate of all Bodhisattvas. His companion, Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Dai Seishi), is identified by the small vase on his crown.<sup>2</sup> The dresses of the three deities are covered with delicate designs delineated by thin strips of gold, a technique known in Japanese as *kirikane*. *Kirikane* is used extensively in this painting: on the designs of the lotus petals, the outlines of Bodhisattvas' scarves, and the golden rays issuing from Buddha's head.

The three deities floating across the sky represent the scene of *raigō* ("descent of Amida"), one of the most popular subjects in Japanese Buddhist art. The cult of *raigō*, perhaps the easiest road to salvation ever offered to a Buddhist, holds that Amida does not merely await your arrival at his blissful paradise in the West, but that he descends to this earth to take you there, sometimes even by force. Amida's residence, the Western Paradise, is considered the most beautiful of all Buddhist paradises (*Sukhāvātī*), and is known in Japanese as

Jōdo (Pure Land). In China, the Pure Land cult became popular during the T'ang dynasty, as is recorded in both literature and painted representations in the Tun-huang cave temples. The extant T'ang representations of this paradise reflect another aspect of Amida theology, which is elucidated in *Amitāyus-dhyana Sutra* (*Kan Muryōju Kyō*, in Japanese), or the *Sutra on Visualizing the Buddha Amitāyus*.<sup>3</sup> Translated into Chinese by the Indian scholar Kālayāsa between 424 and 442 A.D., this sutra urges its devotees to concentrate on visualizing the image of Amida and his two attendants. A T'ang Chinese monk, Shan-tao (613–681), wrote the most famous commentary on it, in which he emphasized the merits of envisaging Amida and repeating his name in order to be reborn in the Western Paradise. The Japanese monk Genshin (known posthumously as Eshin, 942–1017), was considered to be Shan-tao reincarnate. His writing, the *Ōjō Yōshū* (*Essentials of Salvation*) found its most literal and realistic expression in a religious pageant that is performed even today and is known as the *mukae-kō* (“welcome rite”), in which devotees dressed as Bodhisattvas parade to recreate the scene of *raigō*. Genshin's teachings also became indispensable for Fujiwara noblemen on their deathbeds.<sup>4</sup> The arts of garden design, architecture, sculpture, and painting, as well as decorative arts, were brought together to create an ideal palace of Amida, indeed, his paradise on this earth. In such a setting and with the aid of music, the dying person was physically assisted in his lifelong desire to move to the Pure Land when he was raised up on his pallet by five silken varicolored cords which were held in his hand and were attached at the other ends to the fingers of Buddha in a painting or sculpture. The total commitment of Fujiwara noblemen to this faith is well known, its greatest and purest expression being the Hōōdō of Byōdō-in at Uji, where masterpieces in various arts are assembled.

Scenes depicting the coming of Amida and his attendants across the sky were mostly represented in paintings, although a few examples in sculpture are also known. Wall paintings at the Hōōdō dating from 1053 are among the earliest examples of this scene. The most

famous *raigō* painting in Japan is a large silk hanging scroll from the late twelfth century, now at Mount Kōya, in which a large number of Bodhisattvas playing musical instruments join three members of the *raigō* group. In both paintings, many Bodhisattvas are seated on large cloud formations that carry them through the sky. A *raigō* painting in Chion-in, Kyoto, dating in the last half of the thirteenth century, is a prime example of the interpretation of this theme as conceived in the Kamakura period. In this painting, standing deities, some leaning forward, rush across the sky on a comet-like cloud that cuts a sweeping diagonal across the painting.

Two great leaders of the Pure Land cult in the Kamakura period, Hōnen (1133–1212) and Shinran (1173–1262), did not consider these visual aids a particularly effective addition to one's prayers for the move to the Pure Land. Shinran, in particular, asserted that Amida's Pure Land existed in one's own mind. He also made some adverse remarks about sumptuous *raigō* paintings that show many Bodhisattvas rushing to the dying man's bedside, even suggesting that only one Buddha and two Bodhisattvas would suffice.<sup>5</sup> *Raigō* paintings from the end of the Kamakura period and later reflect this change in attitude. The typical later *raigō* paintings, like the one shown here, represent a triad of Amida and his two attendants against the blue sky. This type was also known outside Japan, such as in the hanging scrolls and woodblock prints discovered by Kozlov at Karakhoto in Inner Mongolia.<sup>6</sup>

The sharp diagonal movement of the deities, which was *de rigueur* in *raigō* compositions from the later periods, is usually interpreted only from the viewpoint of stylistic development—that a preference for speed conveys the sense of urgency and immediacy of a society governed by military men. It is also important, though, to remember the description of Shaka's Nirvana which is given in many scriptures (no. 17). When Shaka's last moment drew near, he lay down on his bed reclining on his right side with his head directed north. Later, Buddhists duplicated this pose as they lay dying, so that their faces naturally turned toward the west, and Amida's paradise. For the dying devotee who lay





in this position, a *raigō* painting with strong diagonal movement from the upper left side to the lower right probably best served its function, as the golden rays from Amida's head would meet the follower's gaze in a natural manner.<sup>7</sup> Some other features in this painting also reflect typical characteristics of fourteenth-century Buddhist paintings: the dark blue color that covers the entire background of the painting and the extensive use of *kirikane*, applied even on the gold garment and the shining gold bodies.

1. For a discussion of the cult of Amida, see Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland, 1959), pp. 141 ff.
2. For a discussion of these two Bodhisattvas, see *ibid.*
3. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XII, no. 365, p. 340. Also see The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, ed., *The Shinshū Seiten: The Holy Scripture of Shinshū*, 2nd ed., (Honolulu, 1961), pp. 74–100; Max F. Müller et al., trans., *Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts* (New York, 1969), pt. II, pp. 152–202.
4. Takakusu and Watanabe, *Daizōkyō*, vol. LXXXIV, no. 2682, pp. 33–91; the first two sections of this book were translated by Philip Yampolsky, “Essentials of Salvation: A Translation of the First Two Divisions of Ōjō Yōshū by Genshin” (M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1948), pp. 90 ff.
5. A good summary of this change is in Ishida Ichirō, *Jōdo-kyō Geijutsu* (Kyoto, 1956), pp. 84 ff.
6. Petr Kuz'mich Kozlov, *Mongolia i Amdoimertvyv gorod Kara-Khoto* (Moscow, 1923), pl. 1, pp. 604–606.
7. Yamamoto Kōji, “Raigō Zu no Shōmen Kan kara Naname Kōzu e no Tenkai,” *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 78 (October 1970), pp. 34–49.

## Aizen Myōō (Rāgarāja)

Mid-fourteenth century

Hanging scroll; color on silk

H. 135.1 x W. 89.4 cm (53<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 35<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

PUBLISHED: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Masterpieces of Fifty Centuries* (New York, 1970), pp. 37, 170; "Art of Asia Recently Acquired by American Museums," *Archives of Asian Art* XXI (1967/1968), fig. 30; *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* XXV (October 1966), frontispiece.

This painting, which was formerly in the Burke collection but since given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, represents an elaborately dressed, fierce red god, one of the most common deities in Mikkyō (Esoteric Buddhism). His golden hair flows upward and encircles his crown, a scowling lion mask supporting a *karma-vajra* (cross-shaped *vajra*). He is endowed with an extra eye and holds his attributes in his five hands: lotus flower, arrow, *vajra*, bell, and a bow. His sixth hand forms a loose fist. He is seated on an equally ornate lotus pedestal which hovers behind a large vase, a cornucopia. The dragon-decorated vase literally overflows with varicolored *cintāmani* (wish-granting jewels, or the symbol of treasures), which have spilled out of the vase in some triad formations on the floor.

Like many other Esoteric deities, Aizen Myōō (Rāgarāja, or Mahārāja, in Sanskrit), whose name means "the King of Passion" or "the Great Passion," is regarded as an avatar ("manifestation") of Dainichi (Mahāvairocana), the supreme deity of Esoteric Buddhism. Aizen also epitomizes the dual nature that characterizes many Mikkyō deities. As his name suggests, Aizen is the god of love, both sacred and profane, and he is believed to transform carnal love into sacred. The deep red color of his body expresses that function, but his ferocious and frightening face and some of his attributes, such as the bow and arrow, symbolize his aggressiveness in conquering unfriendly forces. Quite appropriately, he is the principal deity in a liturgy dedicated to prayers for peace and an amicable relationship

with friends. He is also compassionate and generous. As he willingly dispenses treasures for the faithful, his treasure chest overflows with *cintāmani*. Since his name in Japanese, Aizen, is a homophone for *aizen*: indigo (*ai*) dyeing (*zen*), Japanese dyers traditionally regarded him as their protector.

Detailed descriptions of his physical appearance and attributes are given in the *Yugi Kyō*,<sup>1</sup> which was translated into Chinese by an Indian monk, Vajrabodhi (known as Kongōchi in Japan, 671–741), who arrived at the T'ang capital of Ch'ang-an in 720. The worship of Aizen was introduced to Japan in the ninth century, but it did not gain many followers before the Fujiwara period. Literary records of liturgies offered to this deity sharply increased in the eleventh century, as the perpetually love-stricken Fujiwara nobles frequently invoked his intervention to unravel their complicated love affairs. Very few representations of this deity have survived from that period: only one or two paintings, a few drawings included in the twelfth-century collections of drawings made for iconographic studies, and no sculpture. All other extant examples of Aizen in painting or sculpture date from the Kamakura and later periods.

Throughout the Fujiwara period and later, representations of this deity changed very little. The details prescribed in the *Yugi Kyō* were usually observed quite faithfully: the most constant elements are the choice of color for Aizen's body, the facial expression, the crown, the attributes, and the vase full of *cintāmani*. Even the hastily executed sketches of Aizen included in the compendia of drawings such as the *Besson Zakki*<sup>2</sup> and *Kakuzen Shō*<sup>3</sup> conform to the textual description in the *Yugi Kyō*. Occasionally, golden dragons may be depicted on the jewel vase. These may have been simply intended as a Chinese novelty, but it is also possible that they were part of the Aizen iconography, since the *Yugi Kyō* and commentaries accompanying the twelfth-century drawings frequently refer to the ferocious nature of Aizen, who conquers evil spirits in the form of poisonous dragons.

This painting of Aizen conforms to this popular representation. Stylistically, it reflects the general charac-



teristics of Buddhist paintings from the fourteenth century in details such as the deity's golden jewels, the ritual objects, and the decorative designs on the vase, which are delineated in slight relief. On the back of this painting is a colophon, which was written by the monk Gōki on the twenty-seventh day of the fourth month, the second year of the Eikyō era (1430). On the back of the lid of the box containing this painting is another colophon, written on the eleventh day, ninth month, the twenty-eighth year of Meiji (1895) by Kyōyo, the eighty-third abbot of Zōjōji, Tokyo. Kyōyo dedicated

a ceremony to this painting, which then belonged to a certain Miyata. Unfortunately, nothing is known about any of these men.

1. The full name of this sutra is *Kongōbu Rōkaku Issai Yuka Yugi Kyō*. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XVIII, no. 867, pp. 253–269.
2. Ono Gem'myō, ed., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Zuzō* (Tokyo, 1932), vol. III, pp. 404–411.
3. *Ibid.*, vol. V, pp. 226–258.



## Nehan (Parinirvāna)

Mid-fourteenth century  
Hanging scroll; color on silk  
H. 154.9 x W. 106.4 cm (61 x 41<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

The Nehan (Sanskrit: Parinirvāna, or Nirvana, for short) of the historical Buddha, Shaka, embodies the ultimate quest of all Buddhists, as it signifies not death, but the release from the dreaded cycle of birth and rebirth. Tradition has it that Shaka's Nirvana took place on February 15 (or October 15, according to another legend), on the night of the full moon. After a short illness, Buddha lay down for eternal rest on a couch in the forest of Sāla trees at Kushinagara, along the bank of the Ajiravati River in India. From his face beamed rays of golden light that reached all his followers, who immediately rushed to his bedside from the four corners of the world. Various species of animals also gathered around his bed to witness the last moment of Buddha's life on this earth.

This painting of Nirvana is a typical representation: the Buddha reclines on a large bed, surrounded by eight tall Sāla trees. He rests on his right side with his right arm bent to support his head. Mourning at his feet is Dai Kayō (Mahākāshyapa, in Sanskrit), one of the ten disciples of Buddha. Dai Kayō, who was far away on missionary work at the time of Buddha's death, arrived a few days late, and tradition has it that the funeral pyre would not catch fire until his arrival. As soon as Dai Kayō had reached the Buddha's body and had kissed his feet, it is said, the pyre and the body ignited spontaneously. Around Buddha's berth are Bodhisattvas, monks, devas (fierce guardians), lay followers, and various animals. Buddha's golden staff and alms bowl wrapped in a red cloth hang from the branch of a Sāla tree. Above the forest rise three separate cloud formations, in green, pink, and white. A silvery full moon hangs in the middle of the sky, and a white cloud sweeps down from the upper left corner, carrying the Lady Māyā, mother of Shaka. She is joined by her attendants, who are led by the monk Aniruddha (Anritsu), another

one of Shaka's ten disciples, whose task it was to report the sad news of Buddha's death to the Lady Māyā.

The most widely used sutra in Nirvana liturgy in the Far East is the *Dai Hatsu Nehan Kyō* (*Mahāparinirvāna Sutra*).<sup>1</sup> This scripture was written rather late in India in the fourth century A.D. and was translated in 421 into Chinese in a set of forty fascicules by T'an-wu-ch'an. Since Nirvana and Nirvana liturgy were of great importance to all Buddhists, more than one sutra gives a detailed account of this event, and these must have also served as textual sources for the visual representations of this event. The event of Nirvana was represented in arts quite early, especially in the region of Gandhāra, where there are some sculptures dating from the middle of the second century A.D. In China, scenes of the event appeared long before the Chinese translation of the *Mahāparinirvāna Sutra* was completed in the fifth century. The *Shih-shuo Hsin-yü* (*Collection of Anecdotes and Conversations*), which was compiled by Liu I-ching (403-444), includes the earliest known references to the visual representation of this story in China.<sup>2</sup> One story in this book refers to a statue of the recumbent Shaka housed in a pagoda, an appropriate place for the Nirvana, since the pagoda houses Buddha's relics.

Records of paintings from the T'ang dynasty refer to many interior wall paintings of Nirvana decorating Chinese temples, but unfortunately, these are now lost. The only extant examples of T'ang wall paintings depicting Nirvana are in the cave temples of Central Asia and Tun-huang, the northwesternmost outpost of China. These paintings reveal a well-established iconographic convention used in the depiction of Nirvana scenes. The episode of Nirvana was painted frequently as part of the narrative cycle in the eight major events in Shaka's life. Although there are some variations on the selection of individual events included in this set of eight, it usually includes the following: conception, birth, departure from home, asceticism, temptation, enlightenment, first sermon, and Nirvana.

The earliest extant example of the Nirvana subject in Japanese art dates from about 710. It is a group of soft, unbaked, small clay figurines placed at the base of the pagoda of Hōryūji, Nara. It must have been quite com-







mon to represent the scene of Nirvana at pagodas in ancient temples in Japan, since there were similar clay statuettes depicting this theme housed at the western pagoda of Yakushiji, Nara, which was destroyed in 1528.<sup>3</sup> Painted representations of this theme are known from a much later period, perhaps the oldest and most famous of which is at Kongōbuji, Mount Kōya; it is dated by inscription to 1086. Worship of Shaka was partially eclipsed by that of the Mikkyō deities during the Early Heian period and was overwhelmed by the popularity of Amida during the Fujiwara period. In the Kamakura period, however, there was a revival of Shaka worship and a corresponding sharp increase in painted scenes of Nirvana. Except for the great number and variety of animals included in pictures of this subject from the Kamakura and later periods, the basic iconography of Nirvana remained relatively constant throughout its long history, both in sculpture and painting. The painting here, which includes a large array of animals, typifies the Nirvana paintings made during the Kamakura and later periods.

Since paintings of Nirvana were often hung in large meeting halls that could accommodate a large crowd gathered for the Nirvana liturgy, they tend to be large, and the version here is no exception. The painting has painted border designs of flowers, birds, and the wheels

of Buddha's Law. The golden Buddha is dressed in a loose robe decorated with delicate *kirikane* designs (thinly cut strips of gold). Colored clouds rising from the forest and bands of clouds in the sky are decorative and tactile—almost sculptural. The scroll patterns on these cloud formations are tightly formed and outlined in stiff brushstrokes. The outlines of waves in the river and of others that define foliage, tree trunks, and figures of mourners are even and mannered. These features closely resemble many Buddhist narrative paintings made in the first half of the fourteenth century, at the close of the Kamakura period or shortly thereafter.<sup>4</sup>

1. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XII, no. 374, pp. 365 ff. For English translations of other Nirvana sutras, see Kōshō Yamamoto, *The Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra: A Complete Translation from the Classical Chinese Language in Three Volumes* (Ube, Yamaguchi Prefecture, 1973); Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Suttas*, Sacred Books of the East, ed. F. Max Müller, vol. XI, (London, 1903).
2. Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland, 1959), p. 13.
3. Nara Rokudaiji Taikan Kankō-kai, ed., *Nara Rokudaiji Taikan*, VI (Tokyo, 1970), pp. 83–86.
4. Many Buddhist narrative paintings from this period can be found in Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Nihon no Setsuwaga* (*Narrative Paintings of Japan*) (Kyoto, 1961).

## Seiryū Gongen

Mid-fourteenth century

Hanging scroll; color on silk

H. 91 x W. 44.7 cm (35<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 17<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

EX COLLECTION: Maeyama Hisakichi

PUBLISHED: Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Kami-gami no Bijutsu (The Arts of Japanese Gods)* (Kyoto, 1974), pl. 69; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, *Illustrated Catalogue of a Special Loan Exhibition of Art Treasures from Japan* (Boston, 1936), no. 45.

The full-cheeked, voluptuous goddess, Seiryū Gongen, wears elaborate hair ornaments, and courtly silk garments of white, blue, and green. She holds a wish-granting jewel (*cintāmani*) in her right hand and stands majestically in a doorway, while a little girl in front of her holds a book, the *Kōyaku no Shirushi Būmi* (*Records of the Miraculous Medicine*), which the goddess has just given her. Although the painting is damaged considerably and darkened with age, it is still possible to discern delicate designs on the goddess's upper garment. Details of a landscape painting on the sliding panel at the left side shows the season is spring: white cherry blossoms are in full bloom near the shore, and small water birds enjoy the warm weather of a fine spring day.

The name Seiryū Gongen is written in Japanese in two different ways: depending on the characters used, *seiryū* means either "pure waterfall" or "blue dragon"; *gongen* means "god" or "goddess." The goddess is believed to have originally been the titular deity at Ch'ing-lung-ssu (Blue Dragon Temple) in Ch'ang-an, China. She is said to have been introduced to Japan by Kūkai (posthumously known as Kōbō Daishi, 773–835) and was adopted as the protector deity of Shingon Buddhism at Jingoji in Kyoto. Seiryū Gongen is also believed to be the same deity as Zen'nyo Ryūō, daughter of the Dragon King Sagara, whose salvation at age eight is described in a charming tale included in chapter 12 of the *Lotus Sutra* (see no. 13). Because of her association with the dragon, Seiryū Gongen performs dual,

contradictory missions as both a bringer of rain and a protector against flood. The deity was later introduced to Daigoji, Kyoto, and other temples of Esoteric Buddhism, where her theological foundation underwent a complex metamorphosis under the process known as Honchi Suijaku. According to this peculiarly Japanese doctrine, which attempts to coalesce native Shinto gods with Buddhist deities, Shinto gods are avatars, or manifestations of Indian Buddhist deities. The effort to ensure a peaceful coexistence between native and foreign deities had already been at work in the earlier periods, but its development was particularly successful in the Early Heian period. Thus, Shintoism, which never had the tradition of anthropomorphic deities, borrowed from Buddhism the basic concept of images. Seiryū Gongen belongs to this group of deities conceived for the Honchi Suijaku doctrine. She was believed to be the avatar of two Mikkyō deities: Nyoirin Kannon (*Cintāmanicakra*), an expurgator of sufferings, and Juntei Kannon (*Cundi*), who is sometimes associated with fecundity.

The cult of Seiryū Gongen does not seem to have attained great popularity: only two images are known today; this one and an earlier representation now in the Hatakeyama Museum, Tokyo. The earliest known reference to an image of this goddess goes back only to the late eleventh century. According to a record preserved at Daigoji, in 1088, the monk Shōkaku of Daigoji was looking for an appropriate site for a new building to house Seiryū Gongen.<sup>1</sup> While on this search, Shōkaku had a divine vision; in his dream a goddess appeared to him looking exactly like the goddess of beauty and fecundity, Kichijōten. She was dressed like a court lady with layers of beautiful, long-sleeved silk, holding a *cintāmani* in her left hand. Shōkaku ordered his dream recorded in two paintings, which were then carefully stored at the sutra hall of Sambō-in, a subtemple of Daigoji that he founded. Unfortunately, however, these paintings seem to have been lost or destroyed. The Seiryū Gongen in the Hatakeyama Museum has two colophons: one, written above the deity, refers to a divine vision of the goddess who appeared in a dream on the nineteenth day of the fourth month, the





first year of the Genkyū era (1204). The other, on the back of the scroll, was written in 1262 by the monk Seishin of Daigoji, who dedicated this painting after arranging a proper ceremony in that year. Another document preserved at Daigoji refers to another monk, Shinken (1179–1261), also of Daigoji, who is well known for having painted a large number of drawings for iconographic studies.<sup>2</sup> One evening, Shinken dreamed of Seiryū Gongen, and he painted her image exactly as she appeared to him. The description of his vision closely corresponds to details in the Hatakeyama painting: the beautiful goddess, dressed in layers of sumptuous silk, held a *cintāmani* in her right hand, and she gave the book on miraculous medicine to a little girl. This painting was in the Daigoji collection until 1895, when it was sold to Hara Tomitarō, and it is sometimes identified as the painting made by Shinken around 1204.<sup>3</sup> The monk Seishin, perhaps under instruction from Shinken, properly dedicated this painting to the temple in 1262. These stories follow a typical pattern of medieval Japanese myths concerning the origin of many types of portraiture, secular as well as religious. Painted images of Seiryū Gongen were no doubt extremely rare or perhaps nonexistent before Shōkaku glimpsed her in his “dream” of 1088. Thus, in the absence of prototypes, the first image of her was very much influenced by the traditional representation of Kichijōten, a goddess shown in the guise of a voluptuous court lady of T’ang times (see no. 6).

Except for the fact that it lacks a colophon, the painting of Seiryū Gongen in the Burke collection closely resembles the Hatakeyama version in every detail. Since the two are the only known examples of this goddess, the painting here might also have been connected with Daigoji. Stylistically, however, it seems to have been painted considerably later than the earlier picture, which might have served as its model. Such details as the stiff brushstrokes and a generally rigid delineation of landscape details indicate a date in the mid-fourteenth century.

1. For a discussion of literary sources, see Akamatsu Shunshū, “The Statue of Kiyotaki Myōjin in the Upper Temple of Daigo,” *Bijutsu Shi*, 1/3 (March 1951), pp. 1–26.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Fragment from the *Ise Shū*  
(*Anthology of Poems by Lady Ise*)

Fujiwara period (early twelfth century)

Originally a page from a book, now remounted as a  
hanging scroll; ink on decorated paper

H. 20.1 x W. 15.8 cm (7<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

EX COLLECTION: Osaragi Jirō

PUBLISHED: John Rosenfield, *Japanese Arts of the  
Heian Period: 794-1185* (New York, 1967), no. 37 d.

The man came and stood at her gate; hearing a cuckoo  
singing in a flowering orange tree, he composed the  
following verse and sent it in to the lady:

Standing at your gate  
Forlorn am I as the mournful  
Cuckoo that sings  
My sadness from his perch among  
The branches of your blossoming orange tree.

To this she replied:

Hardly can he know  
What errand brings you here  
The cuckoo in my tree  
Is it not his tuneful nature  
Thus to come and sing? <sup>1</sup>

In addition to the two poems with their short prose  
introductions, a line at the extreme right of this frag-  
ment reads in translation: “. . . the color has deepened.”  
These are the last words of a poem which was on the  
right half of a sheet originally belonging to a book of  
poems called the *Ise Shū*.

The author of this amusing poetic exchange is Fuji-  
wara Ise, also known as Ise no Go, a brilliant poetess of  
the Fujiwara period, who probably died in 939. She was  
born to a family of the Fujiwara clan, which boasted a  
number of distinguished poets and scholars. Her un-  
happy love affairs as a young woman, and her subse-  
quent entry into the court of the emperor Uda as his  
consort, are briefly summarized in the introduction to  
her major poetic work, the *Ise Shū*. Her life at court

was abruptly shadowed, first by the death of the son  
she bore the emperor, then by the demise of the em-  
peror himself. She later married one of Uda's sons and  
gave birth to a daughter, Nakatsukasa, who also became  
a noted poetess. The talents of both mother and daugh-  
ter are richly honored, for both are included among  
the Sanjū-roku Kasen, the Thirty-six Immortal Poets.  
Fujiwara Kintō (996-1041), an accomplished poet and  
scholar, was responsible for this selection of distin-  
guished literary immortals, and imaginary portraits of  
the two ladies are included in the famous early Kama-  
kura-period scroll of the Thirty-six Poets.<sup>2</sup>

Lady Ise's poems reflect the transitional cultural pe-  
riod in Japan at the beginning of the tenth century.  
After Japan severed official ties with T'ang China in  
893, Japanese literature began slowly to shed the pon-  
derous influence of Chinese literary forms. The *waka*,  
a truly native form of Japanese poetry in thirty-one  
syllables, gradually emerged during Ise's own lifetime,  
and she is considered one of the pioneers of this literary  
form. In addition to the *Ise Shū*, twenty-two of Lady  
Ise's poems are included in the *Kokin Waka Shū*. Com-  
piled by Ki no Tsurayuki in 905, it is one of the most  
respected collections of classical poetry in Japan.

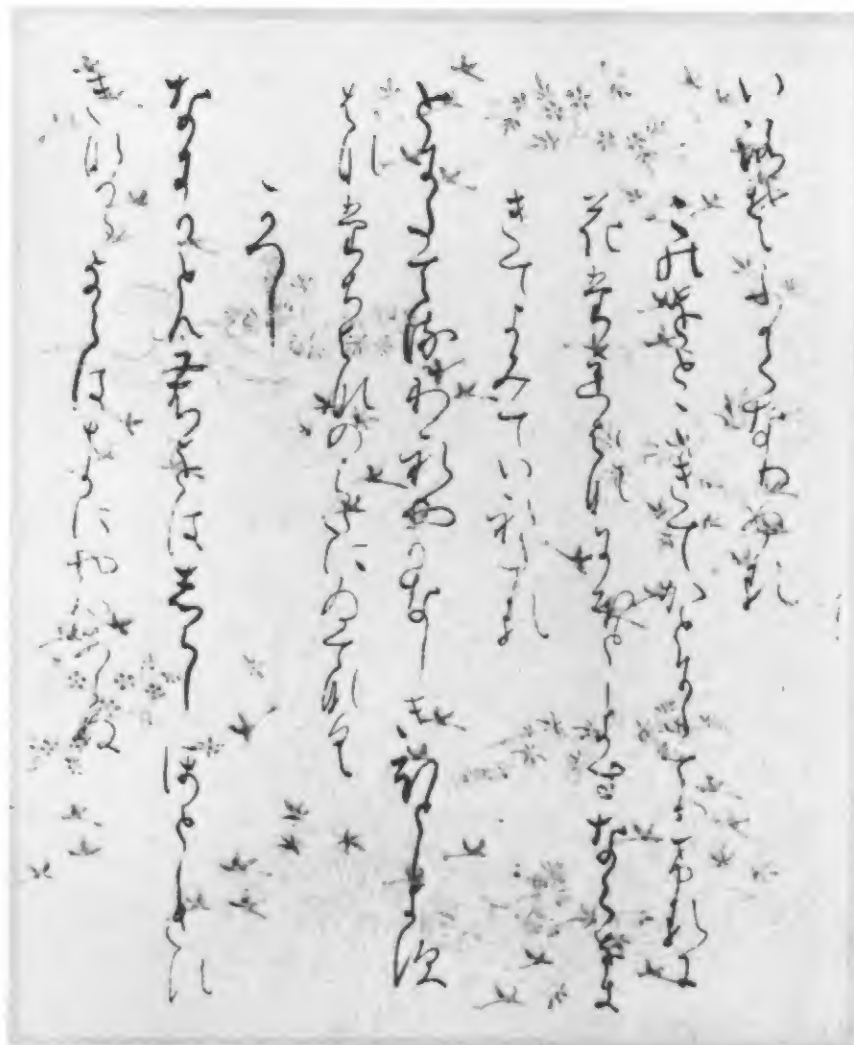
The present fragment is a part of the *Ise Shū*, origi-  
nally contained in a larger anthology, the *Sanjū-roku-  
nin Shū* (*Anthology of Poems by Thirty-six Poets*). In  
its entirety this work consisted of thirty-eight books, a  
book for each poet, with the exception of two poets  
who claimed two books each. The *Sanjū-roku-nin Shū*  
to which the Burke fragment belonged was transcribed  
in the early twelfth century, and it is the oldest known  
version of the anthology. The set was apparently in  
the Imperial collection until 1549 when the emperor  
Gonara presented it as a gift to the monk Ninjo of  
Honganji, a temple then located at Ishiyama, the pres-  
ent site of Osaka Castle. The books were then forgot-  
ten until 1896, when they were rediscovered in a store-  
house of the Nishi Honganji temple in Kyoto. In 1929  
two volumes from the set, the *Ise Shū* and the second  
volume of the *Tsurayuki Shū*, were separated from the  
main body and sold to public and private collections.  
These two volumes were then called *Ishiyama Gire*  
(*Ishiyama Fragments*) in memory of the sixteenth-

century imperial gift to Honganji when the temple was still located at Ishiyama.

Recent studies of the remaining volumes at Nishi Honganji suggest that the books were commissioned at the beginning of the twelfth century by an influential figure at court, most likely the retired emperor, Shirakawa. Since Shirakawa is known to have promoted Japanese poetry, the attribution is a convincing one. He sponsored a number of celebrated poetry contests and commissioned the compilation of two other important anthologies, the *Go Shui Waka Shū* in 1086 and the *Kin'yō Waka Shū* in 1127. The calligraphy of the *Sanjū-roku-nin Shū* has been attributed to twenty different calligraphers, none of whom can be identified by name. Nevertheless, the calligraphy in this anthology is usually regarded as some of the finest early writing in the flowing Japanese *kana* script, particularly noted for its graceful, well-controlled style. The paper used throughout the anthology is superbly decorated.

About fifty different artists and craftsmen worked on more than two thousand sheets used in the set,<sup>3</sup> producing beautiful papers decorated with painting, printed designs, and multicolor collages. The designs on the Burke fragment are rather simple floral patterns printed in mica and tiny pine needles, leaves, and birds painted in silver. Its delicate beauty is but a sample of the aesthetic ideals embodied in the *Sanjū-roku-nin Shū*—the perfect marriage of literature, calligraphy, and decorative skill—and it is the epitome of the courtly taste of the Fujiwara period.

1. John Rosenfield, *Japanese Arts of the Heian Period: 794–1185* (New York, 1967), pp. 121–122.
2. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., eds., *Sanjū-roku Kasen E*, Nihon Emakimono Zenshū, vol. XIX (Tokyo, 1967), pl. 29 for Ise, pl. 47 for Nakatsukasa.
3. Egami Yasushi, "The Counterpoint Intensity in the Decorative Patterns on the Ryōshi of the Anthology of the Thirty-six Poets," *Kokka* 946 (June 1972), pp. 11–18.



Portrait of Fujiwara Teika, Fragment  
of the *Jidai Fudō Uta Awase Emaki*  
(*Contest for Poets from Various Periods*)

Kamakura period (about 1300)

Originally in a handscroll, now remounted as a  
hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

W. 37.5 x H. 28.7 cm (14 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 11 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.)

EX COLLECTION: Sekido Akihiko, Nagoya

PUBLISHED: Mori Tōru, "Jidai Fudō Uta-awase E,"

*Kobijutsu* 8 (March 1965), fig. 8.

A nobleman, formally dressed in a voluminous court robe and tall hat, sits facing us at our left. Thin, even lines describe his face, and the hairline shaping his face

is painstakingly executed in minute strokes. The angular black mass of his costume, defined by broadly brushed outlines, gives a sense of monochromatic solidity that is relieved only by bits of red pigment remaining on his lips and a slight pinkish brown tone at the edge of his belt. His hands, which are completely covered by large sleeves, hold a scepter. His body seems momentarily frozen. His face, turned slightly downward, with lips tightly closed and eyes fixed to one side, suggests deep concentration. His intense scrutiny seems to be fixed on six lines of poetry inscribed at his left side:

Frost has formed on the long drooping tail of a  
solitary sleeping pheasant;  
His bed is illuminated by a frigid full autumn  
moon.



The portrait represents Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), the great medieval poet, and the poem is one of his compositions from the *Shin Kokin Waka Shū*.<sup>1</sup> Teika was the most celebrated literary figure of his day, and the *Shin Kokin Waka Shū* is one of the most popular anthologies of Japanese poetry. It was compiled at the order of the cloistered emperor Gotoba by a group of four scholar-poets headed by Teika and was completed in 1205. In 1232 the emperor Gohorikawa commissioned Teika to put together another anthology, the *Shin Chokusen Waka Shū*. As a poet, scholar, and critic, Teika also wrote a number of essays on poetry and collated texts for such classics as the *Tale of Genji*. His diary, the *Meigetsu Ki*, which covers about thirty-six years of his life in the period 1180 to 1235, is an indispensable document for the study of the Kamakura period.

The present painting was originally part of a handscroll called the *Jidai Fudō Uta Awase Emaki* (*Contest for Poets from Various Periods*), which contained portraits and representative poems for one hundred memorable poets, both dead and living. As its title would imply, the anthology was compiled as an imaginary contest, with the contending poets divided into “right” and “left” groups. Emperor Gotoba is thought to have selected the poets and their poems. The anthology was completed just before his death in 1239 and was probably illustrated in the next few years.

It is difficult to reconstruct the exact format of the original *Jidai Fudō Uta Awase Emaki*. A royal diary, the *Kam'mon Gyōki*, mentions in its entry for 1438 a set of three scrolls,<sup>2</sup> but the two-scroll set seems to have been more popular, since it permitted an even distribution of the one hundred poets. Although the anthology includes three poems of each poet, only one poem each was used in the illustrated versions. Several examples of illustrated scrolls that date to the late Kamakura period are preserved in small fragments, but the complete versions known today are of a much later date. The compositional arrangement of the poets is a simple one: two groups are depicted seated, facing each other in opposing pairs, and a poem is written next to each figure. Although the format is similar to earlier handscrolls illustrating the “Thirty-six Immortal Poets” (*Sanjū-roku Kasen*), the idea of portraying them in competition distinguished the *Jidai Fudō Uta Awase* from earlier scrolls.

The *Jidai Fudō Uta Awase Emaki* from which this fragment was separated, is known to us in slightly more than one dozen pieces.<sup>3</sup> Since Fujiwara Teika faces to our right here, he belongs to the “left-side” group. A comparison with other versions indicates that Teika was thirty-first among the poets represented. Other fragments from the same scroll usually include the name and official rank of each poet, but this one, which is about an inch narrower in width than other fragments, does not include this information. Probably the name and the rank, Gon no Chūnagon (Provisional Middle Counselor), were cut from the extreme right side.

The painting is traditionally attributed to Fujiwara Nobuzane, a great portrait painter of the early thirteenth century, whose style is not fully known, since virtually nothing definitely attributable to him remains. A round seal partly visible in the lower right corner is probably that of a collector. Since stylistic features like the tight, rather stiff brushstrokes are characteristic of works datable to around 1300, an early thirteenth-century date is doubtful.

Portraits of poets and poetesses, known in Japanese as *kasen-e*, originated in the Fujiwara period, when portraits of ancient bards like the eighth-century poet Kakinomoto no Hitomaro were worshipped as sacred religious images. It was not until the Kamakura period, however, that the *kasen-e* emerged as a separate genre of portraiture. Since most of the men who are depicted in these portraits lived long before the Kamakura period, the “realism” of the portrait is the product of an artistic imagination. Nevertheless, the sudden popularity of the genre was stimulated by something more than the mere exercise of artistic license. An intense interest in the literary and artistic traditions of the past was characteristic of the arts of the Kamakura period, and the society that was ruled by pragmatic warriors felt a particular sympathy for blunt realism.

1. For a slightly different translation of this poem and other poems from the same anthology, see H. H. Honda, trans., *The Shin Kokinshū: The Thirteenth-century Anthology Edited by Imperial Edict* (Tokyo, 1970); a few poems from this anthology are included in Donald Keene, *Anthology of Japanese Literature* (New York, 1960), pp. 192–196.

2. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Kam'mon Gyōki* (Tokyo, 1944), p. 545.

3. For other poets from the same scroll, see Mori Tōru, “Jidai Fudō Uta-awase E,” *Kobijutsu* 8 (March 1965), pp. 25–99.



## 21

### Two Fragments from the *Sumiyoshi Monogatari Emaki* (Illustrated Scroll of the Tale of Sumiyoshi)

Kamakura period (late thirteenth century)

Originally a handscroll, now remounted as two hanging scrolls:

Painting, color on paper, W. 71.5 x H. 32.1 cm  
(27<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 12<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

Text, ink on paper, W. 8.4 x H. 30.5 cm  
(12 x 3<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

EX COLLECTIONS: Masuda Tarō, Kanagawa Prefecture; Momiyama Hanzaburō; Yoshida Tanzaemon

PUBLISHED: *Yoshida Tanzaemon Nyūsatsu Mokuroku* (Tokyo, 1924), pl. 48; Hirata Hisashi, ed., *Taishi-kai Zuroku* (Tokyo, 1912), pl. 30.

The *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* (*Tale of Sumiyoshi*) is the story of two lovers, who after a long separation are reunited in Sumiyoshi, a small fishing village located near modern Osaka.<sup>1</sup> This tale of a maltreated stepdaughter, a theme very popular in the literature of the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods, is all the more interesting for its Cinderella-like ending:

Once upon a time, the story goes, a nobleman holding the rank of Chūnagon (Middle Counselor) had two wives. The first wife bore him a daughter, the heroine of the story. Throughout the tale she is called simply Himegimi, “the young princess.” The second wife gave birth to two daughters, Naka no Kimi (“the middle princess”) and San no Kimi (“the third princess”). At the age of eight, Himegimi lost her own mother and thereafter was reared by her stepmother.

A young man of an important family holding the rank of Shōshō (Minor Captain) fell in love with Himegimi, but the stepmother tricked Shōshō into marrying her own daughter, San no Kimi. She also managed to upset every attempt by the father to match Himegimi with a suitable young man. Despondent, Himegimi fled to Sumiyoshi where an old nurse of her deceased mother was living as a nun.

In the meantime, Shōshō was promoted to the rank of Chūjō (Middle Captain), but he was very unhappy and desperate to find Himegimi. After a frantic search and seven days of prayer and fasting to plead divine intervention, he finally found her at Sumiyoshi. Reunited at last, the young lovers were married, and after a few days of celebration Chūjō and Himegimi returned to Kyoto.

Still wary of the wicked stepmother, the couple concealed Himegimi's true identity for seven years; even her own father did not recognize her. During that time, she gave birth to a son and a daughter. On the happy occasion of a ceremony when their children donned new skirts, Himegimi's father was invited to the party and learned, for the first time, about his daughter's safe return and happy marriage. The young couple lived happily ever after, and the evil stepmother ended her life in poverty and disgrace.

The *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* was probably written during the early tenth century. The work of an anonymous author, it predates by many years Lady Murasaki's *Tale of Genji*, which has long been the most popular romantic novel in Japan. The influence of the *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* on Lady Murasaki and her epoch-making *Genji* is widely acknowledged. In another Fujiwara-period work, *Makura no Sōshi* (*Pillow Book*), the author, Sei Shōnagon, praises the *Sumiyoshi* tale as one of the exemplary romantic novels of Japan.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, *Sumiyoshi* has suffered misfortunes. The original manuscript is lost, and the story as we know it seems to have been based on a version extensively modified in the Kamakura period.

References to illustrations of the tale can be found in documents dating to the late tenth century,<sup>3</sup> but the oldest example is a late Kamakura work, of which only a few fragments have been preserved. The largest fragment is in the Tokyo National Museum,<sup>4</sup> but several smaller sections, including this one, are in private hands. The fragment in the Tokyo National Museum illustrates the episode in which Chūjō and Himegimi are finally united and the villagers of Sumiyoshi have gathered at the seashore to celebrate their marriage. The scene of the celebration continues onto a small piece in the Dōmoto collection in Kyoto, which de-

picts the couple enjoying music and merriment with a few of Chūjō's friends from Kyoto.<sup>5</sup> The Burke fragment shows Chūjō, his bride, and friends returning to the capital after the wedding party.

Here crimson maple leaves brighten the country road on a clear autumn day. A group of soldiers marches to the left behind the carriage. A light mist has descended, and the figures of men, horses, and the carriage gradually fade from view. Wide bands of mist in the lower part of the Dōmoto fragment partly conceal trees in the garden and seem to continue without interruption to the Burke fragment. The two pieces, therefore, must have originally formed one long, continuous composition. Furthermore, the picture of travel in the Burke fragment was continued to another scene, now in a Japanese collection, which shows Chūjō and Himegimi starting their return to the capital by boat. When the four pieces are put together, they represent a good portion of the *Sumiyoshi* scroll.

The text which accompanied the illustrations in the *emaki* has not been well preserved. A small fragment containing three lines of text also belongs to the Burke collection. It relates the arrival of Chūjō and Himegimi in the capital:

Then they arrived in Kyoto and went to the mansion of Chūjō's father, who was quite upset about his son's secret marriage to an unknown country girl. Nevertheless, he built a special wing of the house for them and there established the newly-weds.

No other part of the text from the *Sumiyoshi Emaki* is known to exist today. Most of it was lost before 1848 when Sumiyoshi Sadanobu, an artist who is otherwise unknown, made a copy of the scroll.<sup>6</sup> This copy, which is now in a private collection in Japan, is a very faithful



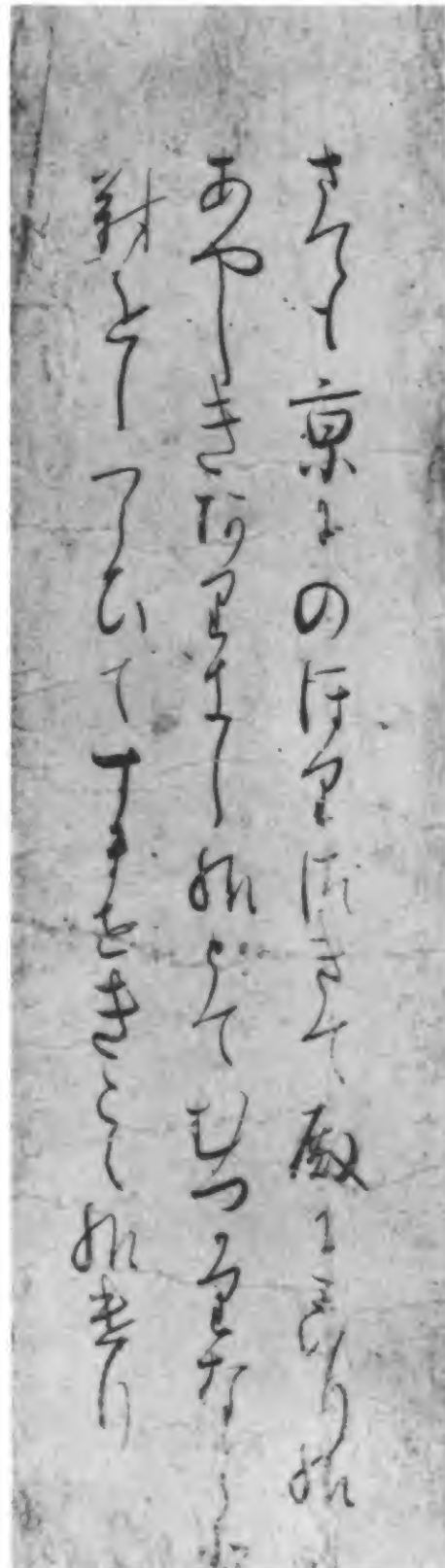


replica of the original one, and the only section of text included in it is that of the Burke collection.

The Tokyo National Museum fragment and its companion pieces are traditionally attributed to Tosa Nagataka,<sup>7</sup> who was active sometime during the thirteenth century, but about whom almost nothing is known. All the stylistic features of the painting point to a date at the end of the thirteenth century: agitated facial expressions of the soldiers, angular and stiff lines on the costumes, rock defined by broad brushstrokes, and short gnarled trees with bent branches. These characteristics are shared by other *emaki* from the same period, such as the *Obusuma Saburō Ekotoba* of 1295<sup>8</sup> and the *San'nō Reigenki* of about 1288.<sup>9</sup>

Although the *Sumiyoshi Monogatari* was read and copied frequently during the Kamakura period, most of the illustrated versions of the tale have been lost. In fact, aside from the fragments discussed above, only one other *Sumiyoshi Emaki* from the Kamakura period is known. This scroll, now owned by the Seikadō Bunko in Tokyo,<sup>10</sup> dates to the early fourteenth century, but it too was severely damaged and is in fragments. The *Sumiyoshi* tale continued to be popular throughout the Muromachi, Momoyama, and Edo periods and was often illustrated in scrolls and books. Extensively modified, however, these later versions bear little relationship to the illustrations produced in the Kamakura period.

1. Harold Parlett, "The Sumiyoshi Monogatari," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 29 (1901), pp. 35-123.
2. Ikeda Kikan et al., eds., *Makura no Sōshi*, Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei (Tokyo, 1958), p. 249.
3. Ienaga Saburō, *Jōdai Yamato-e Nempyō*, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 1966), poems nos. 1236.2 to 1236.8.
4. Mizoguchi Teijirō et al., eds., *Nihon Emakimono Shūsei*, vol. II (Tokyo, 1929), pls. 47-52.
5. Umezu Jirō, *Emakimono Zanketsu no Fu* (Tokyo, 1970), pp. 44-45.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.
7. Kurokawa Mayori, ed., *Zōho Kōko Gafu* (Tokyo, 1888), VII, p. 2.
8. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., eds., *Obusuma Saburō Emaki*, Nihon Emakimono Zenshū, vol. XVIII (Tokyo, 1968).
9. Fujikake Shizuya, "San'nō Reigen-ki Emaki Picture-scroll," *Kokka* 622 (September 1942), pp. 263-270.
10. Taki Seiichi, ed., *Seikadō Kanshō* (Tokyo, 1921), I, pls. 13-15; "A Scene from the Sumiyoshi Monogatari," *Kokka* 240 (May 1910), pl. 4; "Scenes from the Sumiyoshi Monogatari," *Kokka* 320 (January 1917), pls. 1-2.





Fragment from the *Kitano Tenjin Engi*  
*Emaki* (Illustrated History of the  
*Kitano Tenjin Shrine*)

Kamakura period (about 1300)

Handscroll, ink on paper:

Painting, W. 79.9 x H. 28.1 cm (31½ x 11¼ in.)

Text, W. 38 x H. 28.1 cm (15 x 11¼ in.)

EX COLLECTIONS: Matsumi Tatsuo; Kimura Teizō,  
 Nagoya; Kishi Kōkei

PUBLISHED: Umezu Jirō, *Emakimono Zanketsu no*  
*Fu* (Tokyo, 1970), p. 149; Shūjirō Shimada, ed.,  
*Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western*  
*Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 79;  
 Mizoguchi Teijirō et al., eds., *Kitano Honchi*, *Zoku*  
*Nihon Emakimono Shūsei*, vol. I (Tokyo, 1942),  
 pp. 87-89; 105-106.

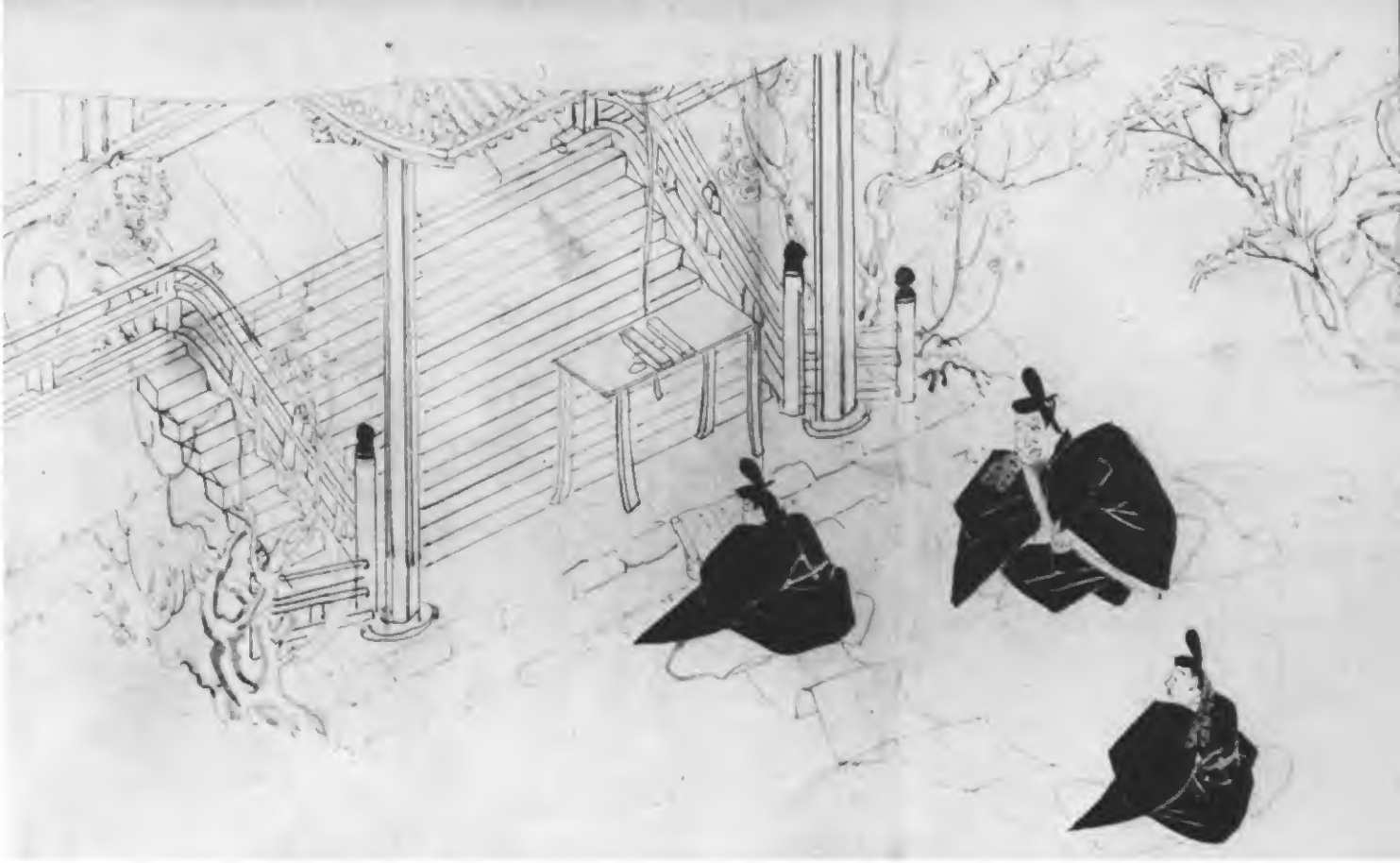
The *Kitano Tenjin Engi*, or *Tenjin Engi* for short, is a typical example of the religious literature popular in medieval Japan. An *engi* is a narrative that describes the origin of a Buddhist temple or a Shinto shrine, and *tenjin* means “heavenly deity.” The Kitano Shrine in Kyoto is one of the most influential Shinto shrines in Japan, boasting ancillary relationships with more than four thousand shrines across the country. The *Kitano Tenjin Engi* tells the early history of the Kitano Shrine in an effective combination of historical fact and miraculous religious tales.

The *Tenjin Engi*, compiled shortly before 1194 by a still undetermined author, is usually divided into three

parts. The first part was based partially on the biography of a ninth-century historical figure, Sugawara Michizane (about 840-903), who was a noted man of letters and one of the most brilliant statesmen of the Heian period. The story begins with the sudden appearance of Michizane as a precocious child endowed with an extraordinary literary talent. Michizane’s phenomenal rise to prominence in the court and his position of favor with the emperor invited the jealousy of his rivals, particularly the leading member of the powerful Fujiwara clan, Tokihira. Michizane finally fell victim to Tokihira’s intrigues: he was forced out of office and sent into exile in Kyūshū, where he died in lonely sorrow. The second part of the story centers around a series of unusual events in the capital. The Imperial Palace was repeatedly attacked by flood or fire, and Michizane’s onetime adversaries, one after another, met with violent deaths or suffered from bizarre ailments. Finally, people began to understand: the angry spirit of the deceased Michizane, bent on revenge, was responsible for these calamities. Pacification seemed impossible. Michizane’s wrath would not be contained short of his deification as Tenjin. Hence, a shrine was dedicated to him, and honors were conferred upon him posthumously. The first Kitano Shrine was erected in 942, and the third part of the *Tenjin Engi* deals with its development into a prosperous Shinto establishment. Included in this section are a number of propagandistic tales: accounts of the favors awarded those who appeal to Tenjin in faith.

Long before Michizane’s time, the *tenjin* were associated with natural phenomena and lacked distinctive personal qualities. In the agricultural communities of





ancient Japan, many Shinto shrines were dedicated to these deities, who controlled weather. The thunder god, the bringer of rain, was especially powerful, and the rural population feared his wrath. When Michizane's vengeful ghost became Tenjin, he acquired all attributes of the deities. His metamorphosis was complete when he also regained the distinction he had enjoyed as scholar and man of letters. As the god of learning and calligraphy, Tenjin is the most highly venerated Shinto deity in Japan. He is especially popular today with students preparing for entrance examinations to high schools and colleges.

All available evidence suggests that the first illustrations for this dramatic, action-filled tale were made before 1194, that is, soon after the entire three-part narrative was completed. The many Tenjin shrines throughout the country, eager to establish connections with Michizane—both real and fictitious—created an enormous demand for copies of the *Tenjin Engi* scrolls. More than thirty scrolls are extant, ranging in date from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Their number, alone, is testimony to the unusual longevity of this story's popularity. On the basis of variations

observed both in text and pictures, the scrolls can be grouped into three distinct stemma.

Most *Tenjin Engi* consist of three scrolls, one for each of three parts of the tale. The Burke fragment originally belonged to a scroll that was the third in a three-scroll set. The text was published in the *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū* in 1924<sup>1</sup> and is the earliest known reference to this version. This publication, however, did not reproduce the other two scrolls, and they have not yet been discovered. The handscroll from which the present fragment comes was intact until 1943,<sup>2</sup> and it was divided up shortly after that year. Three more fragments are known to be in American collections: the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Honolulu Academy of Arts, and the Brooklyn Museum.

In the present arrangement of our scroll, picture is followed by text due to a recent error in remounting. The reverse order is the correct *emaki* format, because the text should prepare the viewer for the next episode. The fragment depicts the fourth episode in part three of the tale, in which the frightened court attempts to placate Michizane's angry spirit. The emperor Ichijō posthumously grants to Michizane a title, Great Minis-

ter of the Left (Sadaijin), Junior First Rank (Shō-ni-i Jū-ichi-i). On 20 August 993, the imperial messenger, Sugawara Narimasa, arrived at Anrakuji, Michizane's mortuary temple, to report this promotion to the deceased's spirit. But Michizane was not at all pacified by the new rank and returned an angry protest to the messenger in the form of a poem. The messenger promptly reported the incident to the court. The emperor was profoundly disturbed, but he responded the following year by bestowing on Michizane the highest possible civilian title, Prime Minister (Dajō Daijin) of Senior First Rank (Shō-ichi-i). This time Michizane was satisfied, and he acknowledged his acceptance with an appropriately happy poem. A postscript at the end of this episode promises that those who recite Michizane's poem once will be given his protection seven times a day.

In the compositional sequence shown in our painting, the messenger is seated in front of Anrakuji, reading the imperial edict. He is accompanied by two courtiers. The only visible recipient of the message is the fierce guardian lion seated on the verandah, scowling as if to test the sincerity of imperial intention. In the background, the seashore is lined with pine trees, and at the far right an odd-looking boat is moored at the beach. These are, however, standard elements of the scene illustrating the second episode in the third scroll of *Tenjin* set, which is separated from the scene of Anrakuji by several other compositions. The composition illustrating the Anrakuji episode was no doubt copied from an unknown model, in which some sheets of paper were mounted incorrectly. As a result, the pictorial components belonging to different episodes were linked together to form a new composition. In other respects, the depiction closely resembles the same scene in a *Tenjin Engi* scroll belonging to the Metropolitan Museum.<sup>3</sup> Both sets of scrolls appear to belong to one recension of *Tenjin Engi* scrolls, which includes the famous early thirteenth-century version in the Kitano Shrine in Kyoto. In fact, the Metropolitan Museum scroll differs from our drawing only in terms of technique: all other features suggest that these two versions descended from a common model.

The illustration in the Burke scroll is executed in the

*hakubyō* ("white-drawing") technique, which uses ink exclusively. The *hakubyō* drawings were not meant to be colored, but an occasional touch of red may be added to the lips. Large areas of dark ink patches, such as a lady's long trailing hair or the full, stiff noblemen's costumes, create abstract decorative patterns that contrast with the white paper and the areas of delicate ink drawings. This type of drawing is usually executed with fine and regular brushstrokes in the tradition of *yamato-e*, rather than with the undulating line associated with the Chinese style of ink painting. The drawing in the Burke *Tenjin* fragment, however, is more spontaneous than is common in *hakubyō* works, adding a sense of drama and movement. Despite this energetic style, the scroll is a typical example of the *hakubyō* genre and should be dated to the period around 1300, when this technique was especially popular.

A few words of explanation are in order concerning the scroll's title. Before the scroll was cut apart, a small piece of paper with the title "Kitano Honchi" was pasted at the beginning. The word "*honchi*" refers to Honchi Suijaku, a term used to describe a phenomenon in which native Shinto gods take on a Buddhist identity. During the Muromachi period, the word was frequently incorporated into the titles of religious literature, even when the text was an old and established legend of a temple or shrine. However, this *honchi* literature often incorporated many changes made on an older text. The *Kitano Honchi* scroll here is an early example of the use of this word in a title, but its text strictly adheres to that of the traditional *Tenjin Engi* formulated in the Kamakura period.

1. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Zuko Gunsho Ruijū*, LVII (Tokyo, 1924).
2. Umezu Jirō, *Emakimono Zanketsu no Fu* (Tokyo, 1970), p. 147.
3. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I, pl. 58; Miyeko Murase, "The Tenjin Engi Emaki in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York," pt. I, *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 247 (July 1966), pp. 72-75; pt. II, *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 248 (September 1966), pp. 114-128.

Battle at Rokuhara: Fragment from the  
*Heiji Monogatari Emaki* (Illustrated Scroll  
 of the Heiji Insurrection)

Kamakura period (first quarter of the fourteenth century)

Originally a handscroll, now remounted as a hanging scroll; color on paper

H. 17.4 x W. 14.8 cm (6<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 5<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

EX COLLECTION: Okamoto Ryōhei

PUBLISHED: Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I, pl. 54; Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., eds., *Heiji Monogatari Emaki*, *Nihon Emakimono Zenshū*, vol. IX (Tokyo, 1964), pl. 43; Akiyama Terukazu, "Fragments of a Hitherto Unknown Scroll of Heiji Monogatari," *Yamato Bunka* 7 (July 1952), pl. 9, fig. 10.

Tales of the mid-twelfth-century Hōgen (1156–1159) and Heiji (1159–1160) era insurrections, captured the imagination of the medieval Japanese with vivid accounts of the men who shaped the destiny of the nation. The clashes between two rival military clans, the Minamoto (also called Genji) and the Taira (Heike), signaled the collapse of the long-held Fujiwara control over the court and marked the beginning of a long history of autocratic rule by generations of generalissimos. Stories of Hōgen and Heiji battles,<sup>1</sup> together with another popular war romance, the *Heike Monogatari* (*Tale of the Taira Clan*) are highpoints of military literature in Japan.

For a long time the two great military clans had quietly built their powers in the provinces: by the mid-twelfth century they had become allied with different factions of the imperial court. Both the Hōgen and Heiji incidents were power struggles between members of the imperial family and the mighty Fujiwaras. When intrafamily quarrels over succession caused a split, each side appealed to one of the military leaders for aid. In 1158 the emperor Goshirakawa abdicated in favor of his son, Nijō, but as a retired emperor he still retained control of the court. Goshirakawa was sup-

ported by a nobleman, Fujiwara Shinzei, who was at odds with the courtier aides to Nijō, especially an ambitious young man named Nobuyori. When battle lines were drawn, the Minamoto supported the Nobuyori faction, and the Taira sided with Goshirakawa and Shinzei. The Heiji struggle began on 4 December 1159, when a force of men led by Minamoto Yoshitomo attacked the Sanjō Palace, the residence of Goshirakawa; it ended a few weeks later with a decisive battle fought along the Kamo River. Yoshitomo was killed while trying to flee, and Nobuyori, who was wounded and arrested, was later executed. The Taira victory appeared to mean the extinction of the Minamoto clan.

It is likely that illustrations for these tales were made shortly after their compilation. Apparently the tales were very popular subjects for *emaki* and were often painted, usually in sets consisting of many scrolls. A fifteenth-century royal diary, the *Kam'mon Gyōki*, refers to a set of fifteen scrolls of the Hōgen *emaki*.<sup>2</sup> Although there are no scrolls of the Hōgen story painted in the Kamakura period, those illustrating the Heiji insurrection dating in the late Kamakura period are preserved. Of these, the opening event in the Heiji war, the burning of the Sanjō Palace, is depicted in a masterpiece that is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The Seikadō Bunko in Tokyo owns a scroll illustrating the tragic death of Fujiwara Shinzei, and the Tokyo National Museum owns a scroll showing the dramatic flight of the emperor Nijō to Taira Kiyomori's Rokuhara mansion. In addition, fourteen small fragments, which once formed a part of a scroll depicting the Rokuhara battle, are now in private collections.<sup>3</sup> The battle at Taiken-mon is preserved in a late copy, and other scrolls illustrate the final episode of the Heiji story—the tragic fate of Tokiwa, the wife of a defeated general, and her small children.

With the exception of the Tokiwa scrolls, the *Heiji* scrolls and fragments share distinctive stylistic features, but it has not yet been ascertained if these paintings once belonged to the same set. Suzuki Keizō, an authority on the history of arms and armor, believes that all the known *Heiji* pictures were made at slightly different times.<sup>4</sup> He dates the scroll of the Rokuhara battle to the first quarter of the fourteenth century.



The Rokuhara battle scroll was intact until 1617.<sup>5</sup> It was damaged sometime during the eighteenth century, but the surviving sections were then cut into fourteen pictures, each measuring approximately 17 x 15 cm, and mounted as an album. In 1943 the pieces were remounted as hanging scrolls and sold separately.<sup>6</sup> The Tokyo National Museum owns an Edo-period copy of the Rokuhara battle scroll, which is complete in both text and illustrations. The copy makes it possible to reconstruct the original sequence of the episodes now preserved in fragments.<sup>7</sup> The Rokuhara battle continued to stimulate the imaginations of later Japanese painters. A late sixteenth-century *Heiji* screen in the Metropolitan Museum<sup>8</sup> and seventeenth-century fans attributed to Sōtatsu attest to an unusual longevity of this war novel as a subject of Japanese painting.

The Rokuhara battle began with the attack by the Genji army on Kiyomori's Rokuhara mansion, which was located near the site of the present Kyoto National Museum. A fierce struggle developed at the gate to the palace and continued eastward to the bank of the Kamo River, where it turned into a decisive Taira victory. The scenes of fighting in the Rokuhara battle scroll are more violent than in any other *Heiji* scroll, and the final scene of fire, when the victorious Taira soldiers burn the homes of the defeated Genji generals, brings the narrative to a dramatic close.

The fragment in the Burke collection, placed tenth in the sequence of fourteen fragments, forms part of the climax of the Rokuhara story. In the midst of crowded and confused scuffles, two pursuing Heike warriors close in on a Genji soldier. One of them, with dagger in hand, grabs the helmet of the Genji man. With sword drawn, the Genji warrior clings to his white horse in a desperate attempt to escape.

Some traces of retouching are visible, for example on the hand and arms of a Heiji soldier and around the muzzle of the brown horse in the lower right corner. A strip of dark green was painted at the bottom of the picture, perhaps to conceal some slight damage, and a small piece of paper, also painted green, was added in the bottom left corner to create a regular rectangular shape. The dark green repair is an attractive contrast to the red streamer of the Taira forces floating at the top of this small composition.

1. William Wilson, trans., *Hōgen Monogatari: Tale of the Disorder in Hōgen* (Tokyo, 1971); E. O. Reischauer and K. Yamagiwa, *Translations from Early Japanese Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), pp. 375–457.
2. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Kam'mon Gyōki* (Tokyo, 1944), p. 387.
3. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., eds., *Heiji Monogatari Emaki*, Nihon Emakimono Zenshū, vol. IX (Tokyo, 1964), pls. 8–11; 34–47. A small fragment of the text is known to have been in existence until quite recently: see Tamura Etsuko, "A Textual Fragment of the Battle of Rokuhara Scroll of the Heiji War Scroll Paintings," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 252 (May 1967), pp. 13–31.
4. Suzuki Keizō, "Paintings in the Picture Scroll of the Heiji Monogatari," *Kokka* 727 (October 1952), pp. 309–316.
5. Akiyama Terukazu, "Fragments of a Hitherto Unknown Scroll of Heiji Monogatari," *Yamato Bunka* 7 (July 1952), p. 2.
6. Fukui Rikichirō, "Shinshutsu no Heiji Monogatari Emaki Zanketsu," *Bunka* XI 8/9 (September 1944), p. 84.
7. Akiyama, "Fragments of a Hitherto Unknown Scroll," pp. 1–11.
8. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), II (text), p. 33; Miyeko Murase, "Japanese Screen Paintings of the Hōgen and Heiji Insurrections," *Artibus Asiae* XXIX 2/3 (1967), pp. 193–228.





Fragment from the *Kōnin Shōnin Eden Emaki* (also known as the *Jin'ōji Engi Emaki*, or *Illustrated Biography of the Priest Kōnin*)

Last half of the fourteenth century

Originally a handscroll, now remounted as a hanging scroll; color on paper

W. 55.8 x H. 34.4 cm (21<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 13<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

PUBLISHED: Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hihō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 88.

The fate of the *Kōnin Shōnin Eden Emaki* typifies the unfortunate vandalism often inflicted upon *emaki*. The scroll is a unique work, specifically made for one temple. Although it was little known, the *Kōnin* scroll apparently survived intact until as late as 1940. Soon after, it was divided into small pieces, many of which were bought by collectors outside Japan; about twenty fragments are known to be in the United States. Since the scroll was not studied before its mutilation, it is difficult to determine the proper sequence of the pieces or to fully understand the story that they illustrate.

When Professor Akiyama Terukazu of Tokyo University investigated the circumstances surrounding the mutilation of the scroll and its original owner, Jin'ōji, a temple near Osaka, he was fortunate to discover there a modern copy. The copy was made after some scenes had already been cut away from the original, so it was possible for Akiyama to reconstruct only a part of the scroll. Nevertheless, he was able to ascertain the general outline of the story.<sup>1</sup>

The *Kōnin Shōnin Eden Emaki* consists of two scrolls that narrate in text and pictures the early history of a small mountain temple. The first scroll once contained seven sections of text describing the founding of Jin'ōji, also known as Kōnoji, together with seven illustrations. The origin of the temple is traced to the seventh century, when the hermit monk En no Gyōja (634-?) established it as the local center for Shugendō, a form of harsh asceticism practiced by mountain her-





mits. According to legend, En no Gyōja traveled to the Silla kingdom on the Korean peninsula to invoke a little-known deity, Hōshō Gongen, and to ask the god to go to Japan and become the guardian divinity of Jin'ōji. The temple was built in 684; it enjoyed a brief period of prosperity until it began to decline in the early eighth century.

The second scroll, in six sections of text with six corresponding pictures, describes the activities of Kōnin Shōnin (d. 778), a Korean monk from the Paekche kingdom who revived the temple, restoring it to its former splendor. Since the two scrolls describe the history of Jin'ōji from its inception to its reconstruction, a proper name for the work might be "Jin'ōji Engi" ("a history of Jin'ōji"). The set has been called the *Kōnin Shōnin Eden Emaki*, because Kōnin's name repeatedly appears on small blue cartouches pasted on the second scroll.

This fragment is a portion of the first scroll, and it illustrates the episode in which Hōshō Gongen responds to the call of En no Gyōja and agrees to go to Japan. En no Gyōja is the old monk seated at the right.

Before him is a minor god and Shinto medium, Shikigami, who was appointed by Hōshō Gongen as a guide. The demonic-looking creature at the foot of the tree helps En no Gyōja to invoke Hōshō Gongen. The god himself, a fierce guardian figure with four arms holding a bow, a spear, a sword, and an arrow, appears in the treetop.

All fragments of the scroll are in unusually good condition. The dark green and blue pigments on hills and foliage are still vivid, and the pinkish white color on the flowers is fresh. Akiyama believes that the legend of Jin'ōji and the priest Kōnin cannot have originated before the twelfth century, and he dates the *emaki* to the last half of the fourteenth century. The painting still retains many characteristic features of *emaki* painted in the late Kamakura period, however, particularly the large landscape elements and the contrasting stiff, straight lines applied to the costumes worn by various gods.

1. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 88.

P A R T 2      The Art of the  
Monochrome Brush

*Ink Paintings of the Muromachi Period*



C ONTEMPLATIVE meditation without appeal to the saving powers of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as a means of attaining enlightenment was a practice that originated in India and formed the basis of a powerful sect in China. The followers of this branch of Buddhism claimed that meditation, called *dhyaṇa* in Sanskrit, Ch'an in China, and Zen in Japan, was the essence of Buddhist truth, transmitted from Shakyamuni to his disciples before his earthly demise and final Nirvana. According to a tradition of long standing, a princely monk from South India, Daruma (Bodhidharma, in Sanskrit), introduced the practice of meditation to China after he arrived there in the early sixth century by sailing up the Yang-tzu River on a pair of fragile reeds. Japanese Buddhists apparently learned about meditation by the middle of the seventh century, and succeeding generations of Japanese monks seem to have been aware of this self-reliant religion.

Before the Kamakura period, however, the efforts of early Zen pioneers, like priests Eisai (1141–1215) and Dōgen (1200–1253), had little success in attracting followers. When many eminent Chinese Ch'an monks emigrated to Japan in the late thirteenth century to escape the Mongol invasion of China, they helped the Japanese converts make Zen the most influential religious force in the country. The Zen emphasis on self-discipline and on the possibility of a sudden flash of enlightenment had an enormous appeal to quick-tempered men of action. Moreover, because Zen ecclesiastics were honest men with firm religious convictions and were familiar with Confucianism, their views and advice were sought frequently by military governors in conducting affairs of state. Zen priests, in turn, were able to enlist the assistance of feudal magnates in their evangelical works. After Kenchōji was founded in Kamakura in 1253 and Enkakujī in 1282, both with the help of the Hōjō regents, the city rapidly became the center of Chinese learning, both religious and secular. After almost four hundred years of isolation, the Japanese were once again awakened to the cultural trends of China by the well-educated Chinese immigrant monks. I-shan I-ning (1247–1317), known in Japan as Issan Ichinei, was but one example of the many educated monks who settled in Japan and inspired the Japanese to seek new directions in the arts. He was an accomplished calligrapher and painter, who wrote colophons on many paintings by Japanese monk-artists and also painted occasionally.

By the mid-fourteenth century, fighting among contending feudal barons left the once-bustling city of Kamakura in ruins, and the short-lived cultural and political preeminence of the eastern provinces came to an end. Although Kamakura continued to command a certain respect among Zen monks in eastern Japan during the Muromachi period and a local school of ink painting remained active

there, the city never recovered from the devastation it suffered at the collapse of the Kamakura military government (Bakufu). Today, the two Zen monasteries of Kenchōji and Enkakuji and Kamakura's much-publicized Great Buddha are the only reminders of the power that initiated the feudal system in Japan.

The Ashikagas, who took over the reins of government in around 1336, established their Bakufu in Kyoto. Once again the traditional capital rose to political and artistic prominence. The Ashikagas produced a number of leaders who were outstanding for their superb artistic tastes, if not for their political achievements. Especially under the reign of the third Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimitsu (1358–1408), Zen and the arts flourished. Many of the Zen monasteries, which today are favorite tourist spots in Kyoto, were built at this time. Particularly important among them is the temple of Shōkokuji (1382), which became the center of Zen studies and the residence of the leading scholar-monks of the Muromachi period. The ink painters who served as the shogun's official artists were also connected with this temple. Shogun Yoshimitsu's attention to the cultured life included extravagant spending sprees which surpassed all but those of Fujiwara Michinaga three hundred years earlier. Yoshimitsu erected several outstanding architectural monuments for his personal use: his palace, the Hana no Gosho (Palace of Flowers, so nicknamed because of the many different varieties of flowers in its garden) was built in 1378, and the famous Golden Pavilion (Kinkakuji, destroyed in 1950 but recently rebuilt) was erected in 1398 as a retirement retreat.

Yoshimitsu's aesthetic pursuits were matched by those of the eighth shogun, Yoshimasa (1435–1490), whose mismanagement of government is often cited as the direct cause for the decline of Ashikaga authority. A great admirer of Yoshimitsu, Yoshimasa also spent large sums on building projects. He constructed a new Muromachi Palace (1458–1461) and started work on the celebrated Silver Pavilion (Ginkakuji) not long before his death.

The Silver Pavilion, originally part of Yoshimasa's villa, is so called because it was to have been covered with silver foil, but that embellishment was never completed. While the relative lack of opulence of this structure may be regarded as an indication of the Ashikagas' declining political and economic powers, it also represents the epitome of the aesthetic premise of understatement. Yoshimasa helped to raise the elegant pastime of drinking tea with a few congenial friends to the rank of a fine art. The simplicity and subdued refinement of the Silver Pavilion correspond to the ideals promoted by Yoshimasa's instructor in tea, Murata Jukō (d. 1502/03), who exalted the peculiar beauty of imperfection. According to Jukō, just as a full moon is even more beautiful in a sky shadowed by occasional clouds, a blemish in an otherwise perfect object may be regarded as something that enhances its beauty. The metaphor describes the aesthetics of "*wabi*" and "*sabi*"—"forlorn" and "rustic" beauty—which draws many elements

of the arts connected with the cult of tea into a harmonious whole. At its highest level, the tea ceremony involves the appreciation of garden design, architecture, interior design, calligraphy, painting, flower arrangement, and all the minor arts, including ceramics, lacquerwares, bamboo and metal work, and even food preparation. It is a truly unique experience of many levels of beauty and taste within the microcosm of a tea room, and the participant's state of mind must be attuned, or at least relaxed, to be drawn into communion with all the arts that surround him. From Yoshimasa's time the accouterments of tea, as well as ancillary activities like the art of arranging flowers, were systematized and elevated to the level of independent arts. The aesthetic tradition thus established left a deep impression on the Japanese, and it still affects their daily lives today.

Among Zen-inspired arts, the new vogue in painting was ink monochrome, which the Japanese call *suiboku-ga*—picture (*ga*) of water (*sui*) and ink (*boku*). Although light washes of color are often added, these paintings are generally executed in ink alone. Before Kanō Masanobu (1434–1530), the early practitioners of *suiboku-ga* were all Zen monks. Some of them were able to travel to China where they learned the art firsthand from the Chinese. No doubt, artistically talented Ch'an refugees also helped the Japanese to learn this difficult medium of expression. Most Japanese painters, however, studied by copying valuable Chinese imports. By the late Kamakura period, the Hōjō regents had a sizable number of Chinese paintings. The collection was housed within the Enkakujī compound, in the Butsunichi-an, which was erected as the mortuary temple of Hōjō Tokimune. The first inventory of the collection, taken in 1320 and recorded in the *Butsunichi-an Kōmotsu Mokuroku*,<sup>1</sup> includes a melange of objects that hardly qualifies as a standard of the collector's discrimination for Chinese paintings. Since most works were anonymous and were identified only by their subject matter, the names of only a handful of Chinese painters are mentioned. Mu-ch'i is an exception in this small group; his name appears three times. On the other hand, the fifteenth-century catalogue of the Ashikaga collection shows that the Japanese had reached a deeper understanding of connoisseurship in the time of the one hundred years after the Hōjō collection was formed. The *Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku*, the catalogue of the Ashikaga collection of Sung and Yüan paintings,<sup>2</sup> was purportedly edited by Nōami (1397–1471), painter, connoisseur, and curator of the shogunal collection. Every painting in the catalogue is attributed; almost all painters are Southern Sung artists; and again, Mu-ch'i leads the list as the favorite, followed by Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei. The romantic, idealized Southern Sung landscapes, which characteristically feature evocative voids and strong asymmetry in composition, became the basic models for Japanese paintings in ink monochrome.

The earliest ink paintings by Japanese artists were Buddhist subjects. Some were traditional icons, but many others were themes introduced by Zen, such as



Daruma, Byaku-e (“White-robed”) Kannon, and the Zen eccentrics Hotei, Kanzan, and Jittoku (see no. 31). These depictions form a stark contrast to traditional Buddhist paintings, which are brightly colored and often liberally embellished with gold (see no. 15). Yet, some early fourteenth-century artists who painted in ink, like Takuma Eiga and Ryōzen, who had been trained in painting Buddhist icons in traditional styles, either switched to ink monochrome later in their careers or worked only occasionally in this new genre. Even the better-documented paintings of Kichizan Minchō and Reisai, conservative ink painters of the fifteenth century, are still polychrome icons. The priestly ranks of Minchō and Reisai, who served as professional painters at Zen temples, were low within the Zen hierarchy, and their work was clearly relegated to the service of religion (see nos. 29, 31).

Other painters, however, like Mokuan, Kaō, or Ue Gukei, seem to have had slightly different backgrounds. They painted figures primarily taken from the Zen pantheon, working occasionally in less obviously religious subjects favored by secular gentlemen-scholars of China. No doubt monk-painters treated these subjects as a means of expressing their Zen-inspired views of nature. Only a small group of scholarly monk-artists, who were well trained in Zen doctrine and literature, painted as an avocation, or perhaps as an aid in their Zen practices. Three artists whose works are included in this catalogue, Taikyo Genju, Tesshū Tokusai, and Gyokuen Bompō, represent this new type of learned scholar-painter (see nos. 26–28). They composed Chinese poems and brushed them on their own depictions of birds, plum blossoms, orchids, and bamboo, just as Chinese literati artists did. These artists are representative of a transitional stage in ink painting; no longer the handmaiden of religion, their work was created purely for aesthetic enjoyment.

The tradition of “professional” monk-painters in residence at temples, however, continued through much of the Muromachi period. The monk-painters who served the Ashikaga shoguns as official painters, like Josetsu, Shūbun, and Oguri Sōtan, were paid with fixed stipends, and probably were not completely free to paint on their own initiative. When commissions were given, they were for very specific subjects and styles; sometimes a particular Chinese painter’s work was to be followed.

In the fifteenth century, landscapes emerged as the most popular theme in ink painting. Pure landscape was never a significant subject in Japanese painting before this time. Within *yamato-e* tradition, the landscape elements in *meisho-e*, or “pictures of famous views,” were intended as background settings for human activities. Fifteenth-century landscape paintings, many of them attributed to Shūbun (see no. 32), were without such genre elements. They were, however, meant to illustrate the quiet seclusion of mountain retreats, which Zen monks thought ideal for contemplation and meditation. Curiously, however, ink land-

scapes of the fifteenth century were subordinate to literature and calligraphy. In this intellectual climate, a unique form of landscape painting evolved. Known in Japanese as the *shiga-jiku*—hanging scrolls (*jiku*) of poetry (*shi*) and painting (*ga*)—they are vertical scrolls with a landscape painting at the bottom and a number of poems, composed and brushed by well-known, highly educated monks, at the top. The painting occupies less space on the scroll than the poems and is modest in size and conception. Only a great master of ink painting as well known as Sesshū (1420–1506) could free himself completely from the strictures of Zen monasteries and raise the art of painting to a higher level. Endowed with unusual artistic vision and strong personal determination, Sesshū made ink painting independent of literature. He was not on a regular stipend, but he had patrons and enjoyed the artistic freedom formerly denied Japanese painters. For these reasons, Sesshū may be regarded as the first true artist of Japan.

1. Kamakura-shi Shi Hensan Iin-kai, ed., *Kamakura-shi Shi: Shiryō Hen*, II (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 200–212.
2. Tani Shin'ichi, "Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 58 (October 1936), pp. 439–447.



## Geese and Reeds

Yüan dynasty, China (?)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

H. 49.9 x W. 29 cm (19<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

PUBLISHED: Etō Shun, "Geese and Reeds," *Kobijutsu* 28 (December 1969), pp. 83–84.

At the beginning of winter, water reeds reach the end of their season, and geese migrate south. Paintings of geese and water reeds imply a passage of time, from late autumn to early winter, as well as from the past to the future. As a symbol of change in time and nature, the theme of "geese and reeds" is believed to have originated in south China, in the provinces of Chekiang and Hunan.<sup>1</sup> Every year geese migrate from the northern regions to this area of lakes and rivers; consequently, waterbirds as a subject of painting have had a long tradition there. Perhaps because the Daruma legend (Bodhidharma, in Sanskrit) recounts how this Indian monk sailed up the Yang-tzu River on a pair of reeds to spread Ch'an Buddhism (Zen, in Japanese) in China, paintings of reeds, together with their appropriate companions, the geese, were regarded as essential decoration in Ch'an temples in China. Early representations of this subject in China were executed in polychrome, but ink monochrome depiction seems to have developed shortly after ink representations of bamboo and orchids became popular in the fourteenth century.

In the painting here, three geese have taken refuge among some stalks of reeds near the water's edge. One has tucked his head into the warmth of his feathers, while two others crane their long necks upward, beaks open, as though attracted by some movement in the sky. The atmosphere is forlorn and dark, and only a few leaves cling to the dry reeds.

The theme of geese and reeds was introduced to the repertory of Japanese painting sometime in the early fourteenth century. The *Butsunichi-an Kōmotsu Mo-*

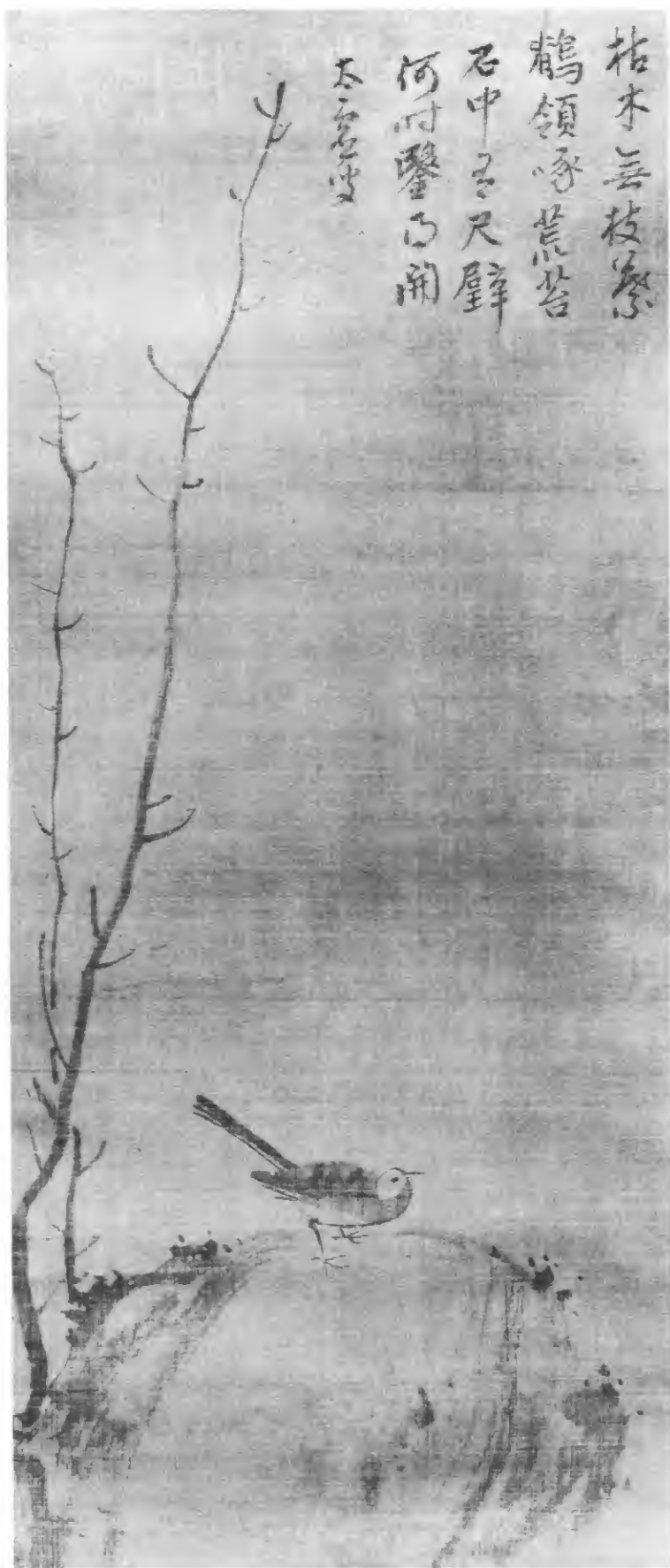
*kuroku*, an early fourteenth-century catalogue of the Hōjō collection of Chinese treasures, includes Chinese paintings illustrating this theme.<sup>2</sup> A scene in the *Genjō Sanjō E (Illustrated Biography of the Chinese Priest Hsüan-tsang)*, an early fourteenth-century *emaki* in the Fujita Art Museum, Osaka, includes a miniature screen painting of this subject. Tesshū Tokusai (active in the mid-fourteenth century) (no. 27) painted the earliest known ink monochrome renditions of this subject. At least three of his paintings of geese and reeds are extant.

The Burke painting displays an advanced technical skill and a highly sophisticated understanding of the genre. The soft, watery brushstrokes that define the bank of the lake, rocks, and plumage of the birds, for example, are executed with a delicate confidence that imparts a sense of moist earth and feather down. The reeds are drawn in dry, sketchy lines that emphasize their brittle fragility. They are poised somewhat tentatively in a large unpainted void that suggests bleak sky and frigid air.

The scene is painted over a paper that has been imprinted in the upper right corner with a graceful bouquet of lotus flowers and orchids. The technique used to produce this subtle design is now lost, but a number of paintings and calligraphy scrolls in Japanese collections are executed on similarly decorated paper, which has always been considered Chinese. On the basis of material and style, Etō Shun attributes this painting to an early fourteenth-century painter active in the Yüan dynasty in China.<sup>3</sup>

1. For a study of Chinese representations of this subject, see Yonezawa Yoshiho, "On the Pictures of Wild Geese and Reeds," *Kokka* 929 (January 1970), pp. 31–40.
2. Kamakura-shi Shi Hensan Iin-kai, ed., *Kamakura-shi Shi: Shiryō Hen*, II (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 200–212.
3. Etō Shun, "Geese and Reeds," *Kobijutsu* 28 (December 1969), p. 84.

枯木無枝葉  
鵲領啄荒苔  
石中三尺壁  
何時鑿石開  
太玄堂



## Wagtail on a Rock

Fourteenth century

Taikyo Genju (active, fourteenth century)

Hanging scroll; ink on silk

H. 83.1 x W. 35 cm (32 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 13 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: "Taikyo-sō"

SEAL: "Taikyo" (?)

PUBLISHED: Kanagawa Kenritsu Hakubutsu-kan, ed., *Kamakura no Suiboku-ga* (Tokyo, 1972), fig. 16; Matsushita Takaaki, *Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, vol. 13, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1967), fig. 136; Kamakura Kokuhō-kan, ed., *Kamakura no Suiboku-ga*, Kamakura Kokuhō-kan Zuroku, vol. IX (Kamakura, 1962), fig. 2; Matsushita Takaaki, *Muromachi Suiboku-ga* (*Suiboku Painting of the Muromachi Period*) (Tokyo, 1960), fig. 14.

The true topic of this simple, charming composition of two slender bare trees, a bird, and a rock is Zen training. The wagtail, arrested in his near-crouching perch on the rock where he has been pecking at the moss, is compared, in the colophon above, to a monk in search of truth. In translation the colophon reads:

The withered tree has no leaves on its branches;  
The wagtail pecks at the moss.  
The stone contains the jade of truth;  
When will he be able to open it?

Taikyo-sō

Nothing is known about Taikyo Genju, the writer of the colophon, except for a few facts about his travels. He studied Zen with Yakuō Tokken (1244–1319), a famous master who worked mainly in Kamakura. Later, Taikyo Genju traveled to China, where he continued his studies with the leading Ch'an masters of the Yüan dynasty. After returning to Japan, he lived for a



while in Fukugenji near Kōbe, but he is known to have traveled back to Kamakura in 1374.

The Yale University Art Museum owns a painting depicting a wagtail on a rock that is very similar to this one, but it has no colophon.<sup>1</sup> Both are simple, asymmetrical compositions with pictorial elements described in a few brushstrokes. The dry, broken strokes forming the rock create a sense of its rough surface; a wetter ink and finer lines are used on trees and the plump bird. Very possibly Taikyo Genju was responsible for both compositions, as well as for the colophon on the Burke painting. Many Zen monks of his time excelled in painting and calligraphy, and Taikyo Genju may have been one of the learned Zen pioneers of ink painting in Japan.

1. "Art of Asia, Recently Acquired by American Museums in 1965," *Archives of Asian Art* XX (1966/1967), p. 106, fig. 61.

## Orchids, Bamboo, Thorns, and Rocks

Mid-fourteenth century

Tesshū Tokusai (active, about 1342–1366)

Hanging scroll; ink on silk

H. 72.2 x W. 37 cm (27 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 14 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.)

Colophon by Tesshū Tokusai

SEAL: "Tesshū"

EX COLLECTION: Fukuoka Kōtei

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu, *Kaō, Mokuan, Minchō*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikē, vol. V (Tokyo, 1974), pl. 16; Nakamura Tanio, "Orchids, Bamboo and Stones by Tesshū Tokusai," *Kobijutsu* 40 (March 1973), no pl. no.

From ancient times in China, small, prim orchid blossoms were associated with the virtues of character regarded as the proper qualities to be cultivated by a gentleman—nobility, modesty, and purity. A similar symbolism was attached to the bamboo; its graceful, strong, and resilient trunk was likened to the superior moral rectitude of an educated man. Aside from their allusions, ink paintings representing both plants offered the perfect subject for testing the extent of an artist's ability in brushwork: the brushstrokes used for Chinese characters and in the leaves of the plants are similar and both require a practiced ease. Thus, paintings of orchid and bamboo, sometimes combined with thorny bushes and rocks, became the specialties of the gentleman-painter in China in the fourteenth century.

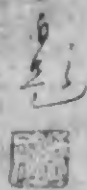
The champion of the genre was a Ch'an monk, P'u-ming, also commonly known as Hsüeh-ch'uang.<sup>1</sup> Although P'u-ming enjoyed popular renown as the greatest orchid painter of his day, he lost favor among later Chinese critics and collectors. Today, almost all of his extant paintings are preserved in Japan, where he has been respected, almost deified, as the greatest painter of orchids in the history of Chinese painting. Japanese monk-painters who traveled to China in the fourteenth century, including Tesshū Tokusai, the artist of this painting, introduced the genre to Japan, where it remained a favored subject of artists working with ink until landscape replaced it in popularity.

Although documentary proof is lacking, Tesshū is said to have studied painting with P'u-ming while he studied Zen in China. His painting here does show a conceptual and stylistic affinity with P'u-ming's work. In drawing the rocks, Tesshū held the brush at an angle when changing direction, in the style of P'u-ming. The manner of summarizing the surface texture of rocks with strong, dry brushstrokes and the form of the foliage also resemble the technique of P'u-ming. Short dark strokes define small bamboo leaves, while sustained arches form the shape of supple orchid leaves. Orchids painted by the Chinese master, however, seem to be growing wild in a field. In spite of Tesshū's dependence on a Chinese model, his painting expresses a more gentle and cultivated ambiance than P'u-ming's works. The difference suggests that Tesshū's work is representative of a transitional stage, before the Chinese model of this genre was transformed completely by the master Gyokuen Bompō (about 1347–about 1420), who created an ideal Japanese type of orchid painting (see no. 28).

Since only a few literary sources refer to the life of Tesshū Tokusai, he has remained relatively obscure.<sup>2</sup> According to brief accounts found in standard reference books for the biographies of priests, such as the *Empō Dentō Roku*<sup>3</sup> and the *Honchō Kōsō Den*,<sup>4</sup> Tesshū was born in the province of Shimotsuke (modern Tochigi prefecture, not far from Tokyo), but moved to Kyoto at an unknown date. In Kyoto, he studied with the great Zen master Mukyoku Shigen (1282–1359) at Tenryūji. On his trip to Yüan China to study Zen, Tesshū received instruction from Nan-ch'u Shih-shuo, Yüeh-chiang Chang-yin, Ku-chih Ch'ing-che, and Chung-feng Ming-pen, who were some of the most respected Ch'an monks of the period. Tesshū is said to have received a warm reception from the Yüan emperor, Shun-tsung (r. 1333–1367), who bestowed upon him an honorary title Yüan-t'ung Tā-shih, a Chinese name normally used to refer affectionately to the Bodhisattva Kuan-yin (Kannon, in Japanese). After returning from China around 1342, Tesshū continued his Zen studies with Musō Soseki (d. 1351) and became close friends with Gidō Shūshin (d. 1388), who was the teacher of Gyokuen Bompō. Tesshū worked at



楚江千里一  
不思為同遠  
下國長二水何



Manjuji and other temples in Kyoto and finally retired in 1363 to the Ryūkō-in at Saga, where he died. Although it is impossible to establish a precise chronology from this sketchy information, it is clear that Tesshū belonged to an élite circle of priest-scholars, poets, and painters who resided at the prestigious Zen temples of Kyoto.

The *Kūge Shū*, a collection of poems by Gidō Shūshin, includes a number of verses in praise of Tesshū's orchid paintings.<sup>5</sup> An anecdote has it that Tesshū painted orchids almost every day with a kind of religious fervor. This painting is especially important to the study of his work, because it is one of the few that bears a poetic composition by him written in his own hand. This poem may be translated:

The river of the Chu country is  
one hundred thousand miles behind me,  
But my thoughts are with it.  
Let me ask the fragrant orchids—  
Are you still the flavor of flavors?

The *Embu Shū*, a collection of Tesshū's poems,<sup>6</sup> includes other colophons he wrote on his own paintings, but while many of these are concerned with a wide range of subjects such as animals, flowers, grapes, and landscapes, curiously enough, in none of them does Tesshū refer to his paintings of orchids. Nevertheless, at least four of the eight or ten extant paintings by Tesshū are paintings of orchids, and only a few depict other subjects, such as monkeys and geese.

Kanō Tsunenobu (1636–1713), an artist who copied many ancient Chinese and Japanese paintings, reproduced the Burke painting when it was still paired with a second scroll as an orchid diptych.<sup>7</sup> The original companion piece seems to have existed as late as 1850, when its colophon was recorded in the *Koga Bikō*,<sup>8</sup> but its present whereabouts are unknown. Compared to Tsunenobu's copy, this painting appears to have been trimmed slightly on both sides, resulting in the loss of the tips of the leaves on the right-hand side and a corner of the rock on the left. Nevertheless, the composition retains the same sense of monumentality and strength characteristic of orchid paintings by the Chinese master P'u-ming.

Tesshū is traditionally reputed to have been the teacher of two great ink painters of the late fourteenth century: Ue Gukei (active, 1361–1375), who is best

known for his paintings of grapes and geese, and Gyokuen Bompō. Since either by extant works or through literary records, Tesshū's name is associated with all of the subjects that were specialties of these two artists, Tesshū may indeed have been their teacher. Only recently has he begun to attract the attention of scholars and connoisseurs for his role as an important ink painter of the fourteenth century. Judging from the excellence of the small group of paintings attributed to Tesshū so far, he may well emerge as one of the most important ink painters in the art's formative stage in Japan.

1. Chu-tsing Li, "The Oberline Orchid and the Problem of P'u-ming," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* XVI (1962), pp. 49–76.
2. A brief description of his life and references to a few paintings by this artist are in Asaoka Okisada, ed., *Zōtei Koga Bikō* (Tokyo, 1912), I, p. 306.
3. Bussho Kankō-kai, ed., *Empō Dentō Roku* (Tokyo, 1917), I, pp. 323–324.
4. Wada Toshihiko, ed., *Dai Nihon Bunko: Bukkyō Hen* (Tokyo, 1935), II, p. 52.
5. Uemura Kankō, ed., *Gozan Bungaku Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1936), II.
6. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shishū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. LXXX, no. 2557, pp. 544–562.
7. Nakamura Tanio, "Orchids, Bamboo and Stones by Tesshū Tokusai," *Kobijutsu* 40 (March 1973), no pl. no.; Nakamura Tanio, "Geese and Reeds," *Kobijutsu* 38 (September 1972), fig. 2; Nakamura Tanio, "Paintings by Tesshū Tokusai," *Museum* 98 (May 1959), p. 22.
8. Only the colophon is reproduced in this book. See Asaoka Okisada, ed., *Zōtei Koga Bikō*, I, p. 306.



## Diptych of Orchids, Bamboo, and Thorns

Muromachi period

Gyokuen Bompō (about 1347–about 1420)

Hanging scrolls; ink on paper

Each scroll, H. 89.4 x W. 31.9 cm (35<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 12<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: “Gyokuen-shi” on the right scroll

SEAL: “Gyokuen” on both scrolls

PUBLISHED: *Masterpieces of Asian Art in American Collections, II* (Asia House, New York, 1970), pp. 128–129; Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 102; Nakamura Taniō, “Pair of Orchids by Gyokuen Bompō,” *Kobijutsu* 14 (August 1966), pp. 105–108.

Long orchid leaves envelop clusters of short, wide leaves of a young sprig of bamboo, and broad, dry strokes swiftly drawn at the base of the plant act almost as the vase of a floral arrangement. A staccato rhythm created by the repetition of short sharp strokes suggesting the prickly thorns of a rose bush is repeated in the coal black spots dotted as moss on the rocks and on tiny centers of orchid blossoms. A strong asymmetry in the composition, created by the movement of the leaves toward the center of each scroll, indicates that the two paintings were intended as a diptych. The swaying blades of resilient orchid leaves reach out to a space beyond the edges of the paper. While the artist's signature appears on the right-hand scroll, only his seal is impressed on the left one.

Nakamura Taniō has suggested that, like this pair of paintings, many orchid paintings by Bompō were originally intended to be diptychs and that perhaps some single scroll paintings may someday find their original companions.<sup>1</sup> Couplets written on paintings of bamboo and orchids found in works like the *Kūge Shū*,<sup>2</sup> an anthology written by the Zen priest-poet Gidō Shūshin (d. 1388), demonstrate the popularity of the compositional arrangement of such diptychs. In fact, the structure of Bompō's paintings somewhat resembles the work of Tesshū Tokusai, an older contemporary of

Bompō. We know that the Tesshū Tokusai painting of orchids, no. 27, originally formed half of a diptych.

The orchid symbolizes moral virtues and consequently occupied a prominent place in the repertory of priest-painters in Bompō's time. Bompō is considered a specialist in this genre, and other subjects are seldom associated with his name. Zen monks who wrote about Bompō's orchid paintings often pointed out his debt to the mid-fourteenth-century Chinese monk P'u-ming, who is widely acclaimed as the greatest of all orchid painters.<sup>3</sup> Although Bompō never traveled to China, some of P'u-ming's paintings were already in Japanese collections, and Bompō may have had the opportunity to see them there. Several paintings of orchids by Tesshū Tokusai recently rediscovered suggest, however, that Bompō's style is more directly related to that of the Japanese master than to P'u-ming's. Bompō's rendition of orchids is much more subdued than those painted by either P'u-ming or Tesshū Tokusai, and it closely reflects the taste of the contemporary Zen cultural milieu.

In spite of the fame that Bompō enjoyed as a monk, poet, and painter, few biographical facts about him are known. A thorough examination of literary references to Bompō, conducted by Kumagai Nobuo some years ago helps to reconstruct an outline sketch of the artist's life.<sup>4</sup> Nothing is known about his birthplace and early childhood. The first known mention to his name, made around 1370, is in the *Kūge Rōshi Nichiyō Kufū Ryaku Shū*,<sup>5</sup> a diary of Gidō Shūshin. Bompō was then twenty-three and working as a novice at Tōshōji in Kamakura. At that time, he had the priestly name, Gyokukei, which he changed around 1373 to Gyokuen, a name he used for the rest of his life. Apparently, Gidō Shūshin was Bompō's instructor in literature, and when he left Kamakura for Kyoto, young Bompō accompanied him. In the capital, Bompō seems to have studied with another noted monk-scholar, Shun'oku Myōha. Prompted, perhaps, by the death of both his teachers in 1388, Bompō left the capital shortly thereafter, moving to the southern tip of Honshū Island to become abbot of Eikōji and, later, to the island of Kyūshū to be abbot of Manjuji.

Bompō must have returned to Kyoto at the beginning of the fifteenth century, when his name begins to appear frequently in colophons written on ink paintings, together with those of other leading monk-poets in the capital. These paintings are not by Bompō, except for two or three, but are traditionally attributed to artists like Josetsu, Minchō, and Shūbun, pioneers of ink painting in the early Muromachi period. The *Saimon Shingetsu Zu*, dated 1405, in the Fujita Museum in Osaka, is the earliest painting bearing Bompō's colophons, which continue to appear on paintings until about 1420. In fact, almost all of the extant *shiga-jiku*, ("scrolls of poetry and painting") of the early fifteenth century—about a dozen—have colophons composed by Bompō.

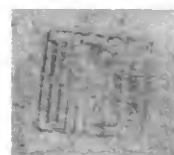
Bompō's career as a priest reached a climax in the early fifteenth century in Kyoto, where he served as the abbot of two of the most prestigious Zen temples of Japan: at Ken'ninji until 1409; at Nanzenji until 1413. He seems to have retired from active service soon after 1413, when he moved to a small subtemple, the Chisoku-ken, which is within the Ryūge-in of Nanzenji. A Bompō seal bearing the name Chisoku-ken appears with many of his colophons on paintings, indicating that he was still at Nanzenji in 1418. It is not clear how much longer he remained there. Before he died, Bompō enjoyed briefly the friendship and patronage of the fourth Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimochi, even instructing him on the tenets of Zen. For some unknown reason, Bompō seems to have aroused the shogun's displeasure, which caused him to take refuge in a small temple in nearby Ōmi province (now Shiga prefecture). The only record of his last days in this province, a short letter he wrote to Genchū Shungaku (d. 1428) on 22 April 1420, states that having invited Yoshimochi's anger, he has decided to withdraw to a small temple and that since he is seventy-three years old, he will not be long in this world. Bompō died, probably in Ōmi, on 12 March of an unknown year, most likely soon after 1420.

Although no documentation has yet been found, several scholars have suggested that Bompō's last refuge was the Eigenji of Ōmi. This temple always maintained a close connection with the Ashikaga family and Zen monks in the capital. The great ink-painter Shūbun

is sometimes believed to have started his priestly career there, and the shogun Yoshimochi, who once studied Zen with Shōrei, abbot of Eigenji, favored the temple with his patronage. Bompō and the temple are linked to the history of another painting, *Autumn Landscape with Maples at Eigenji*, no. 85, by Nukina Kaioku (1778–1863). The lid of the box containing Bompō's orchid diptych has an inscription giving the title of the paintings and Bompō's name as artist, written in 1837 by Kaioku. Since Kaioku visited Eigenji at least once, he may have found the Bompō diptych there and may have been asked to inscribe the box.

All of Bompō's colophons written on *shiga-jiku* include both names of his signatures and a seal reading "Gyokuen." Occasionally additional seals appear. Usui Nobuyoshi, who studied these numerous specimens, found that Bompō's signature and the Gyokuen seal changed on the *Keiin Shōchiku Zu* of 1413.<sup>6</sup> The Chinese characters used for this name are different from those written and impressed on the *Saimon Shingetsu* of 1405 and the *Bashō Yau* of 1410. Sometime between 1410 and 1413 Bompō must have changed the second character for the second part of the name Gyokuen. All of Bompō's paintings dated after 1413 show his signature and seals in the new character, except for three or four paintings that have a signature written with the old character and a seal with new spelling. The orchid diptych here belongs to the small group of paintings that may be dated between 1410 and 1413, when Bompō used new characters for his seal, but still retained the old spelling for his signature.

1. Nakamura Tanio, "Pair of Orchids by Gyokuen Bompō," *Kobijutsu* 14 (August 1966), pp. 105–108.
2. Uemura Kankō, ed., *Gozan Bungaku Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1936), II.
3. Chu-tsing Li, "The Oberline Orchid and the Problem of P'u-ming," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* XVI (1962), pp. 49–76.
4. Kumagai Nobuo, "Bompō, an Artist and Priest of the Ashikaga Period: A Biographical Study," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 15 (March 1933), pp. 95–113.
5. Kondō Heijō, ed., *Zoku Shiseki Shūran* (Tokyo, 1930), III, p. 55.
6. Usui Nobuyoshi, "Seals of Gyokuen Bompō," *Nihon Rekishi* 171 (August 1962), pp. 36–39.



# Monju Bosatsu (Bodhisattva Manjushrī)

Muromachi period

Kichizan Minchō (1352–1431)

Hanging scroll; ink and gold on paper

H. 82 x W. 35.6 cm (32<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 14<sup>1</sup>/<sub>32</sub> in.)

SEAL: "Hasōai"

EX COLLECTIONS: Nozaki Hirota; Inoue Kaoru



The half-length figure of the youthful Monju Bosatsu (Bodhisattva Manjushrī), the incarnation of Supreme Wisdom, is set against a large white halo.<sup>1</sup> Monju's pure wisdom is thought to be best symbolized by the image of an innocent boy. As the seeker of the truth, Monju is the most enthusiastic member of the audience at Shaka's sermons, always prodding the Buddha with questions. His name appears in Chinese literature as early as the fourth century.<sup>2</sup> Before the rise of his popularity in the T'ang dynasty, however, Chinese Buddhists knew him primarily as the divine antagonist of the wiser and older intellectual, Vimalakīrti (Yuima, in Japanese) in a legendary debate on difficult metaphysical questions.<sup>3</sup> Chinese T'ang Buddhists discovered in the sutra *Monju Shiri Hōbōzō Darani Kyō* that Monju's earthly residence is at Wu-t'ai-shan in Shansi province, north China, the abode of many native gods.<sup>4</sup> Wu-t'ai-shan then became a famous pilgrimage site, especially for the T'ien-t'ai Buddhists (Tendai, in Japanese), and Monju was exalted as their archangel. The standard visual representation of this learned teacher and dialectician is usually Monju on his vehicle, the lion, holding a scroll of sutra and/or a sword.

Monju's popularity rose sharply among Ch'an Buddhists, who felt that his identity as the embodiment of transcendental knowledge came closest to their concept of the Ideal Teacher, the guide of the faithful through the difficult path of Supreme Enlightenment.<sup>5</sup> In the Ch'an pantheon, Monju is distinguished from the usual icon by his dress: instead of the usual dhoti and scarves worn by other Bodhisattvas, he wears a long-sleeved kimono-type garment. He carries the book or scroll of scripture in his hand as a symbol of

his role. A peculiar iconographic type, known in Japanese as the *Sōe* or *Jōe* Monju was also developed, in which Monju is dressed in a robe made either of grass or braided rope. A charming legend has it that an official of the Northern Sung dynasty, Lü Hui-ch'ing, was baffled by certain passages in Buddhist texts and went to Wu-t'ai-shan, seeking assistance from Monju.<sup>6</sup> During a terrible thunderstorm a young boy who, at a first glance, resembled a blue dragon suddenly appeared to him. Upon closer inspection, he was found to be wearing a simple robe made of braided grass and holding a book of scripture before him. The boy reminded Lü that the Truth should not be obscured by reading texts and commentaries. In order to dispel the official's doubts, the boy transformed himself into the traditional form of Monju and disappeared into the clouds riding on a golden-haired lion. As a result of this legend, Monju dressed in a humble robe of braided grass had a special appeal to Ch'an followers, who saw in him a learned ascetic.

The cult of Monju and Wu-t'ai-shan was well known to Japanese monks of the Heian period, some of whom wrote memoirs about their visits to this sacred mountain in a remote part of China.<sup>7</sup> The Ch'an representation of this deity, either in a kimono-type dress or in a *jōe* or *sōe*, became an integral part of the iconography of Japanese ink painting. The painting here was inspired by that tradition. Monju wears a brilliant gold diadem and earrings, his only ornaments, and holds a book of scripture, the testament of the Law. His long hair, which is caught in the breeze, is very finely and sharply delineated, as are all of the other details. The brushstrokes outlining the hair heighten the image of the purity of the youth's wisdom as well as his mystery.

Comparison with similar works suggests that the painting may illustrate the Sung legend of the "dragon-boy" who descended from the heavens. The Asano family in Tokyo owns a painting of Monju, also attributed to Kichizan Minchō, that is almost identical to the painting here, except for the addition of an enormous train of clouds that looks as if it has just brought the youth down from the sky.<sup>8</sup> The Asano painting is flanked by two panels illustrating dragons. Another Monju painting, in Chionji, Kyoto, which was executed by Shūkō, a monk-artist active in the sixteenth century, resembles both of these versions and shows faint, but distinct clouds behind the figure.<sup>9</sup> It is quite

possible, therefore, that the Burke-collection Monju not only depicts the legend, but also once represented the central panel of a triptych.

The artist, Minchō, was born in Awaji, a small island in the Inland Sea, just south of Kōbe. At the age of five, he came under the tutelage of a Zen master, Daidō Ichii (about 1292–1370) at Ankokuji in his native town. Sometime after Daidō was appointed abbot of Tōfukuji in Kyoto, Minchō followed him to this temple, probably when he was still in his twenties. At Tōfukuji, Minchō held the lowly rank of Densu, an office in charge of the maintenance of liturgical utensils, thus earning the name by which he is popularly known, Chō Densu. Little information is available about his teacher and early training in painting. Since Tōfukuji was then one of the leading Zen monasteries, it must have owned a sizable collection of Chinese paintings, which Minchō would no doubt have studied. Nevertheless, his major works reveal his close dependence on traditional Buddhist painting in colors, into which he incorporated the strong ink lines of the Chinese paintings.

A legend has it that Minchō sent a self-portrait in 1383 to his ailing mother, whom he was unable to visit because he was engaged in a monumental project to paint a set of fifty scrolls representing five hundred disciples of Buddha, the Arhats (Rakan, in Japanese). Unfortunately, the original portrait is lost. Tōfukuji owns a twice-removed copy, however, in which the fine, delicate, and sharp brushstrokes delineating the facial features of the young novice and the folds of the garments resemble those used on the figure of Monju. These outlines differ markedly from the strong, often exaggerated ones that characterize Minchō's mature paintings, suggesting that the Burke painting may belong to Minchō's youthful period in the late fourteenth century.

The seal impressed on this painting reads "Hasōai," meaning "torn straw sandal." He seems to have chosen this sobriquet in self-mockery as a symbol of worthlessness when he was scolded by his master Daidō for spending too much time on painting and not applying himself more rigorously to religious training.

Among about a dozen paintings that are generally accepted as Minchō's works, all but two are figure paintings, some in ink monochrome, others in polychrome. Buddhas and disciples, Kannon, the scene of



Nirvana, and a few *chinsō* (portraits of Zen teachers) are the dominant themes of his paintings. Two exceptions are landscape paintings: *Keiin Shōchiku* of 1413, which is generally accepted on stylistic grounds as Minchō's work, and *Seizan Haku-un*, dating sometime before 1419, which bears Minchō's "Hasōai" seal. The strong preference for figure painting reveals the rather conservative nature of this artist, who painted primarily traditional Buddhist themes. In this respect, he was quite different from his educated priestly contemporaries Tesshū Tokusai and Gyokuen Bompō, who painted only secular, literary themes, like bamboo, orchids, or plums (see nos. 27, 28). Two younger ink painters, Sekkyakushi and Reisai, both of whom also were connected with Tōfukuji and are considered Minchō's pupils, limited their work to figure paintings (see nos. 30, 31). Minchō and his pupils represent a distinct "school" of painters, whose activities were centered around Tōfukuji and who continued the older tradition of polychrome Buddhist paintings while incorporating the technique of ink monochrome.



1. For a discussion of this Bodhisattva and the history of its faith, see Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland, 1959), pp. 220–221.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
3. For the early Chinese representations of this episode, see LeRoy Davidson, *The Lotus Sūtra in Chinese Art: A Study in Buddhist Art to the Year 1000* (New Haven, 1954), pp. 32 ff.
4. This sūtra was translated by an Indian, Bodhiruci, in 710. See Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Tokyo, 1914–1932), vol. XX, no. 1185 A, p. 791.
5. For this aspect of the Monju cult, see Jan Fontein and Money Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston, 1970), no. 32.
6. John Rosenfield and Shūjirō Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art: Selections from the Kimiko and John Powers Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), no. 64; Hui-Joon Ahn, "Manjusri Wearing a Braided Robe," *Archives of Asian Art* XXIV (1970/1971), pp. 36–58; Chen-ch'eng, ed., *Ch'ing-liang-shan Chih* (1956 ed.), VI, p. 27.
7. For example, *Nittō Gubō Junrei-kō Ki* by En'nin, who visited the mountain in 840. See Bussho Kankō-kai ed., *Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho: Yūhō-den Sōsho, I* (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 169–281; also *San Tendai Godai-san Ki* by Jōjin, who visited there in 1072. See *ibid.*, III, pp. 1–167.
8. Aimi Shigeichi, *Asano Kōshaku Kabō Efu* (Tokyo, 1917), no pl. no.
9. Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Muromachi Jidai Bijutsu-ten Zuroku* (Illustrated Catalogue of the Special Exhibition: Fine Arts of the Muromachi Period) (Kyoto, 1967), no. 16; Tanaka Ichimatsu and Nakamura Tanio, *Sesshū, Sesson, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikēi*, vol. VII, pl. 77.

## Ox and Herdsman

Muromachi period

Sekkyakushi (active, first half of the fifteenth century)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

H. 53.6 x W. 29.6 cm (21 1/8 x 11 3/8 in.)

SEAL: "Sekkyakushi"

EX COLLECTION: Nakamura Tanio, Kanagawa Prefecture

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu, *Kaō, Mokuan, Minchō*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikei, vol. V (Tokyo, 1974), pl. 106; Jan Fontein and Money Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston, 1970), no. 45; Tanaka Ichimatsu and Yonezawa Yoshiho, *Suiboku-ga*, Genshoku Nihon no Bijutsu, vol. XI (Tokyo, 1970), pl. 40; Nakamura Tanio, "Bokudō Zu," *Nihon Bijutsu Kōgei* 379 (January 1970), p. 98; Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hihō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 103; Nakamura Tanio, *Sumi-e no Bi* (Tokyo, 1959), pl. 42; Heibonsha, ed., *Sekai Bijutsu Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1928), XVI, pl. 113; "Sekkyakushi," *Kokka* 58 (July 1894), p. 187.

On a grassy slope a tousled herdsman tends a large ox. Above them, sharp pine branches shoot down from the upper right corner. The ox is the main subject of the painting and is described with great care. Broad sweeps of ink define the hard contours of the animal's body, and long hairline strokes delineate the patches of furry softness on the head, body, and tail. Contrasts of light and dark ink are used to create volume and to accentuate individual features, like the whorls of hair on the flank, joints, hoofs, horns, and upturned nose. With a variety of brushstrokes and ink tones, the artist has skillfully depicted an animal that is impressive for its gentle bovine bulk.

The bull is sacred in India to Buddhists and Hindus alike and is frequently mentioned in the *kōan* (dialogues between the master and pupil) of Ch'an Buddhism. By the mid-eleventh century in China a set of ten poetic parables, called the *Ten Oxherding Songs*, had been composed as an aid in attaining the essence of

Ch'an truth, and at least a dozen different versions of the songs are known today.<sup>1</sup> These describe, in allegorical terms, ten stages in the spiritual training of Ch'an Buddhism: 1. Looking for the Ox; 2. Seeing the Footprints of the Ox; 3. Seeing the Ox; 4. Catching the Ox; 5. Herding the Ox; 6. Returning Home on the Back of the Ox; 7. The Ox Forgotten—the Man Remains; 8. Both Man and Ox Forgotten; 9. Returning to the Fundamental—Back to the Source; 10. Entering the City with Hands Hanging Down.

Outside the religious sphere, the motif of the ox occupied a special place in Chinese painting, because the animal symbolized the unique relationship between men and beasts. Secular paintings of oxen and their herding had become a popular ink-painting subject before the early twelfth century, when the Sung court moved to south China. Paintings of oxen, therefore, had a double attraction, both secular and religious, for Ch'an painters of the Southern Sung dynasty.<sup>2</sup>

It is not known when the first painted illustrations of the *Ten Oxherding Songs* were made in China, but a version written and illustrated by the Southern Sung priest Kuo-an (mid-twelfth century), was especially popular and was published many times in woodcuts. Unfortunately for our study, few sets of early paintings of this theme are preserved. The earliest Japanese example is a fifteenth-century work attributed to Shūbun.<sup>3</sup>

It has been suggested that the ox painting in the Burke collection originally belonged to a set of ten paintings illustrating the *Ten Oxherding Songs*,<sup>4</sup> most likely the fifth episode, "Herding the Ox." A painting in the Kumita collection in Tokyo, which was sometimes considered part of the same set,<sup>5</sup> depicts a herdsman grappling with the horns of a resisting ox. The rough, agitated strokes of the leaves and tree branches suggest the violent struggle implied in the fourth parable of the series. In contrast, calm prevails in our painting: the ox is submissive to its master's control, and the pine branch above is tranquil. The mood is the essence of the fifth parable. While the Kumita painting is slightly smaller than this one, it is believed to have been trimmed in recent remountings. It can also be argued, however, that there are stylistic differences in the



paintings as well as in their seals.<sup>6</sup> If the paintings belong to one set, the seals should be identical. Until more paintings of similar style and subject are uncovered, it will be impossible to determine whether these two paintings are from the same set or whether they indeed illustrate the *Oxherding Songs*.

Very little is known about Sekkyakushi, the painter of this piece, except that he was active in the first half of the fifteenth century. A painting by Sekkyakushi representing Shaka at the moment of attaining enlightenment has a dated inscription of 1414, and another, *Jōe Monju* (Monju Bosatsu dressed in a robe of braided grass), which is now in the Musée Guimet, Paris, has a dated inscription of 1418. Further identification of this artist is difficult, because he is another of the many ink painters of the early Muromachi period whose career was overshadowed by the great fame of his contemporary Kichizan Minchō (1352–1431) (see no. 29). Sekkyakushi was also thought to be another name for the priest-painter Reisai (active, mid-fifteenth century) who is, himself, often confused with Minchō (see no. 31). In fact there are distinct stylistic similarities between the works of these three artists, which suggests a possible master-pupil relationship. Another interesting similarity is that the names they chose for their seals commonly refer to the theme of feet or sandals. One of Minchō's seals includes the characters for "torn sandals"; the first two characters in Reisai's seal refer to legs; and the name "Sekkyakushi" means "red-legged child." Although the paintings by these three artists included here do not show their common stylistic fea-

tures to best advantage, many other paintings are very close.

Such similarities also seem to reflect a common background. If Sekkyakushi was indeed a pupil of Minchō, he must have been drawn into the orbit of the priests at Tōfukuji, where Minchō lived and worked. In contrast to their more progressive, avant-garde contemporaries—Shūbun, Teshū Tokusai, and Bompō—the Tōfukuji painters constituted a group trained in traditional techniques of Buddhist figure-painting; no painting of flowers or birds by these artists has yet been found. Viewed in this context, it is unlikely that Sekkyakushi's painting of the ox was executed for purely aesthetic appreciation. All we know of the artist indicates that the painting illustrates one of the *Ten Oxherding Songs*.

1. H. H. Trevor, *The Ox and His Herdsman: A Chinese Zen Text* (Tokyo, 1969); D. T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (New York, 1960); Shibayama Zenkei, *Jūgyū Zu* (Tokyo, 1954). For a brief but excellent discussion of this subject, see Jan Fontein and Money Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston, 1970), pp. 113–118.
2. Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (London, 1956), II, pp. 96–97.
3. Fontein and Hickman, *Zen Painting*, pp. 113–118.
4. Nakamura Tanio, "Bokudō Zu," *Nihon Bijutsu Kōgei* 379 (January 1970), p. 99; Tanaka Ichimatsu and Yonezawa Yoshiho, *Suiboku-ga*, Genshoku Nihon no Bijutsu, vol. XI (Tokyo, 1970), p. 172.
5. Nakamura, "Bokudō Zu," p. 99; Tanaka and Yonezawa, *Suiboku-ga*, p. 172.
6. Yonezawa Yoshiho, "A Cowherd," *Kokka* 802 (January 1959), pp. 17–19; Tanaka and Yonezawa, *Suiboku-ga*, p. 98.



## Bukan, Kanzan, and Jittoku

Muromachi period

Reisai (active, mid-fifteenth century)

Diptych of hanging scrolls; ink and light color on paper

Each scroll, H. 96.5 x W. 34.6 cm (38 x 13 5/8 in.)

EX COLLECTION: Satsuma Jihei

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu, *Kaō, Mokuan, Minchō*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikēi, vol. V (Tokyo, 1974), fig. 39; Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), pls. 8, 9.

Bizarre shapes of vaporous clouds set the stage for this unusual diptych. In the left scroll two unkempt men stand on a hillside. The one to our right, with his back turned to us and a bamboo bucket in his left hand, is Kanzan (Han-shan, in Chinese), meaning “Cold Mountain.” The bucket is Kanzan’s attribute, with which he is supposed to have collected leftover foods from temple kitchens. His animated companion is Jittoku (Shih-te), meaning “the foundling”; he holds a broom that he used to perform menial tasks around temples. The right scroll represents Bukan (Feng-kan), their elder mentor who is always accompanied by his pet tiger. Only the face of this docile creature is visible as he snatches a cat nap in the shadow of the rock on which his master is seated. The attention of the three men is riveted on the abyss, or canyon, in the background, intent on something in that void. The setting is probably the Icy Cliff at the T’ien-t’ai-shan, the mountain in south China that is the abode of these three legendary, quasihistorical characters.

The three human beings and their feline companion is one of the favorite themes of ink painting by Zen monks in China and Japan. They are believed to have lived in the T’ang dynasty, from the late eighth to the early ninth centuries,<sup>1</sup> but only a few historical facts about them are known. Of the three, the legend of Kanzan is best documented by three hundred poems that are attributed to him. These poems describe Kanzan as rather mundane, an unsociable man born of a farmer’s family, whose only enjoyment in life was reading books. However humble, this hobby led to Kanzan’s being rejected even by his own wife, and he left his village to live at the Icy Cliff. His poems suggest





little of the eccentricity usually associated with his character and behavior; his reputation as a nonconformist probably arises from the preface to a collection of his poems, the *Han-shan-tzu Shi-chi*.<sup>2</sup> The preface is traditionally attributed to Lü-ch'iu Yin, a T'ang prefect in the T'ai-chou area. In it, Lü-ch'iu describes his visit to Bukan in his search for enlightenment. Bukan, in turn, referred him to Kanzan and Jittoku, whom he described as the personifications of two Bosatsu: Monju and Fugen. When Lü-ch'iu made the proper obeisance to them, the two men shouted and laughed and said: "Bukan has a long tongue. You did not recognize Miroku at first sight; why are you making obeisance to us now?"<sup>3</sup> Whereupon they joined hands and fled to neighboring mountains. In our painting, Kanzan and Jittoku point to the valley, either in reference to the futility and fatuity of Lü-ch'iu's search or to the nature of truth as being as vaporous as the rising mist.

Stories of Kanzan and Jittoku, particularly those described in Lü-ch'iu's preface, had a natural appeal to Ch'an monks, but they were also attractive to literati painters. Early Chinese paintings of the three strange men date mostly from the Southern Sung and Yüan dynasties. In Japan they were apparently not well known in the Kamakura period, as the theme is not recorded in the *Butsunichi-an Kōmotsu Mokuroku* of 1320, a catalogue of Chinese art objects in the Hōjō collection.<sup>4</sup> By the mid-fourteenth century, however, this subject and its peculiar charm began to be appreciated by some Japanese ink painters, and some extant works by the monk-painters Kaō and Mokuan represent the triple group. The subject enjoyed enormous popularity in the fifteenth century, when it was even painted by an Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimochi (1386-1428), a devout Zen follower and talented amateur painter. The *Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku*, an early fifteenth-century catalogue of the Ashikaga collection of Chinese paintings, records a large number of depictions of this theme.<sup>5</sup> Variations that developed in later periods show Kanzan and Jittoku individually or in a pair, or the three men with the dozing tiger, or Bukan and the tiger as a pair. However, these variations usually do not imply any specific narrative content. The diptych here, which seems to suggest a particular episode of the legend, is apparently an exception.

Here, light washes of orange-red have been applied on the bodies of the men; brown adorns the robe of

Bukan and the shoes worn by Bukan and Jittoku. Otherwise, the painting is in ink monochrome, which varies in subtly graded tones from coal black to the lightest hue of gray. The ice-cold atmosphere and “cutting edge” of Jittoku’s laughter that permeate this painting are relieved only by the contented, dozing tiger. Lines delineating the folds of the men’s robes begin thickly and deliberately, creating exaggerated “nailheads” and turns in each brushstroke. A similar angularity describes the rocks in the foreground—the one on which Bukan is seated as well as the cliff profiles jutting into the abyss. Other features are the application of ink over broad areas, as if ink were color, and the absence of texture strokes, *shun* (*ts’un*, in Chinese), on rocks and ground.

From the seventeenth century until only recently, this diptych was attributed to Kichizan Minchō, an ink painter who was active at Tōfukuji (see no. 29). Kanō Tan’yū (1602–1674) wrote a certificate of attribution of these paintings to Minchō that is still preserved with the paintings. A few years ago, however, Etō Shun reattributed the pair on stylistic grounds to Reisai, a younger contemporary of Minchō.<sup>6</sup> As Shūjirō Shimada points out, there is a faint trace of a square seal at the upper right-hand corner of the left scroll. The seal might have been Reisai’s, which was subsequently erased to comply with the attribution to Minchō.

It is not altogether surprising that historians of the past confused the identities of Minchō and Reisai. Both artists used seals that have themes of feet. One of Minchō’s seals, “Hasōai,” means “torn straw sandals,” while Reisai’s seal, “Kyakutō Jitchi,” means that feet are firmly planted on real ground. Stylistic features of Reisai’s painting, such as the cubic form of the rocks, are sometimes noted on Minchō’s paintings. Nevertheless, the diptych is stylistically closer to the signed and sealed works of Reisai, such as the painting of *Kanzan* in the Gotō Museum, Tokyo, the *Three Sages Tasting Vinegar*, formerly in the Moriya Kōzō collection, and *Monju on a Lion*, now in the Tokyo National Museum.

There is almost no biographical information about Reisai, but judging from his stylistic connection to Minchō, he may have belonged to the circle of painters who were based at Tōfukuji in Kyoto.<sup>7</sup> Another clue seems to strengthen Reisai’s link to Tōfukuji: the painting of *Monju* in the Tokyo National Museum is an ink monochrome work, except for the gold used to de-

lineate delicate jewelries and the designs on *Monju*’s clothing; gold ink is also used in Reisai’s signature. This rather old-fashioned practice recalls the work of Ryōzen, an artist who was active a century earlier and who also signed his name in gold ink. He painted traditional Buddhist figures as well as some Zen-inspired subjects, and he is believed to have worked at Tōfukuji. Reisai seems to have painted only Buddhist subjects, both traditional and Zen, and if he ever executed secular paintings, they are yet to be discovered.

Reisai’s artistic activity covered at least thirty years. In 1435 he painted a large Nirvana picture, now in Dai-zōkyōji, Yamanashi prefecture. It is accompanied by an 1821 copy of the original colophon, which states that the painting was executed by “Monk Reisai” in 1435 for Jōkyōji in Shizuoka, near Kamakura. This Nirvana picture was modeled closely after an older picture of the same subject in the collection of Enkakuji, Kamakura. This historical date allows us to postulate that Reisai may have come from the east, possibly from around Kamakura, where he received his early training in traditional Buddhist pictures. Later, he moved to Kyoto, where he became acquainted with Zen monks, some of whom wrote colophons on his paintings. Perhaps it was through this connection that Reisai had a chance, in 1463, to accompany a trade mission to Korea organized by Shibukawa Norinao of Kyūshū; there he presented a painting of the *White-robed Kannon* to the reigning king, Sejo.<sup>8</sup> In this respect, Reisai seems to have followed in the footsteps of his illustrious and slightly older contemporary Shūbun, who had gone to Korea exactly forty years earlier (see no. 32).

1. Wu Chi-yu, “A Study of Han-shan,” *T’oung Pao* 45 (1957), p. 393; see also Burton Watson, *Cold Mountain: 100 Poems by the T’ang Poet Han-shan* (New York, 1970), p. 10.
2. Wu, “A Study of Han-shan,” pp. 411–414.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 414.
4. Kamakura-shi Shi Hensan Iin-kai, ed., *Kamakura-shi Shi: Shiryō Hen*, II (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 200–212.
5. Tani Shin’ichi, “Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku,” *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 58 (October 1936), pp. 439–447.
6. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 104.
7. For a comprehensive study of Reisai’s life and work, see, Watanabe Hajime, *Higashiyama Suiboku-ga no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1948), pp. 237–255.
8. Kuksa P’yonch’an Wiwonhoe, ed., *Choson Wangjo Sillok* (Seoul, 1955–1958), VII, p. 583.





## Landscape after Hsia Kuei

Muromachi period

Attributed to Shūbun (d. about 1460)

Six-fold screen; ink and light color on paper

W. 274.8 x H. 153.9 cm (108¼ x 60⅝ in.)

Inscription by Kanō Yasunobu (1613–1685), with  
his seal: "Hōgen"

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu and Nakamura Tanio,  
*Sesshū, Sesson, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikei*, vol. VII  
(Tokyo, 1973), fig. 6.

The artist Shūbun is a paradox: although he is, with Sesshū (1420–1506), one of the two great names in the history of Japanese ink painting, his life and work still remain problematical. While Sesshū's personal history has been extensively recorded and analyzed, Shūbun appears in only a few literary sources and his paintings

are perfunctorily documented.<sup>1</sup> A colophon written by a noted monk, Son'an Reigen (1404–1488), on monk Bokkei's portrait of Shūbun is an important source.<sup>2</sup> Two others are the *Onryōken Nichiroku*,<sup>3</sup> an official record of the activities at Shōkokuji, and the *Kam'mon Gyōki*,<sup>4</sup> a diary written by Prince Fushimi Sadafusa (1372–1456), who is better known as Gosukō-in. A colophon that Sesshū wrote in 1495 on his famous *Ink-splash Landscape*, now in the Tokyo National Museum, offers further evidence. Sesshū gave this painting to his pupil Sōen as a "diploma" commemorating the latter's successful completion of his training. In the colophon, Sesshū traces the line of artistic descent from Josetsu to Shūbun and then to himself. According to these materials, Josetsu seems to have been the first priest to be employed at the shogun's official temple in Kyoto, Shōkokuji, serving there as an artist in residence. Shūbun succeeded Josetsu as the Ashikaga's official artist,



but his official title was Tsūsu, business manager, and he seems to have belonged to the Ashikaga family's private temple, Tōjiji.<sup>5</sup> His outstanding talent for managing complicated financial affairs is recorded in a number of Shōkokuji-related documents. These brief accounts of Shūbun's activities make only oblique references to his work as a painter and emphasize his work in sculpture and crafts.

In 1423 Shūbun joined an official party of monks and businessmen who went to Korea in search of a printed set of the *Tripitaka* (*Compendium of Buddhist Scriptures*). The Korean court record, the *Yijo Sillok*, mentions Shūbun's name. He may have had a chance to study some Korean paintings during this trip.<sup>6</sup> Shūbun seems to have been quite versatile. In 1430 he applied color to a statue of Daruma commissioned by the Ashikaga shogun Yoshinori. Ironically, this sculpture is the only work to have survived that can be positively at-

tributed to Shūbun. In 1440 Yoshinori again commissioned Shūbun to complete a large Amida triad he had ordered for Ungoji in Kyoto. The project had failed twice before 1440, but Shūbun successfully finished the sculpture to the shogun's satisfaction. Such records suggest that artists then employed by the shogunate were expected to handle a variety of artistic productions, much like the artists at the ancient Chinese court. It is assumed that Shūbun died shortly before 1463. Temple records of that year show that Shūbun's stipend was given to a new painter, Oguri Sōtan (1413-1481), and Shūbun's name no longer appears in contemporary literature.

Even more troublesome than the problem of reconstructing Shūbun's life and career is that of finding stylistic criteria for his oeuvre. While almost all paintings attributed to Shūbun are landscapes, literary references mention only his Buddhist paintings or the genre of





flowers and birds. The numerous landscape paintings attributed to him exhibit a variety of styles. Although some of them bear his signature and seals, none is unanimously accepted as genuine. Indeed, scholars cannot even agree about which paintings should be considered representative of this master's work. If the attributions are correct, however, Shūbun may be considered the first Japanese ink painter to treat landscape as a major subject of ink painting.

Although Shūbun's brushwork defies clear definition, two features distinctive to paintings attributed to him are significant as typical of the general approach to ink landscapes in the first half of the fifteenth century. Most of the paintings from that period are ink landscape paintings known as the *shiga-jiku*, scrolls of poetry and painting. The *shiga-jiku* format is tall and narrow, with more surface space devoted to the poetic colophons at the top than to the simple painting at the bottom. Colophons were usually written by the contemporary poet-monks, whose official positions, education, and social esteem outranked that of the painters. This odd juxtaposition clearly indicates that Shūbun and his contemporary artists did not enjoy high social position for their artistic ability. They were considered to be merely craftsmen and their art to be subservient to the higher art of poetry.

These *shiga-jiku* are also marked by a high viewpoint into the distance and a strongly asymmetrical arrangement of pictorial elements. This distinctive composition represents a second characteristic of landscape painting attributed to Shūbun, which, as Matsushita Takaaki has pointed out, may be a result of Korean influence.<sup>7</sup> These features can also be observed in several folding screen paintings associated with Shūbun's name. The screens seem to be composed of several small vertical compositions transposed from hanging scrolls and rearranged on a wider surface to form a new and larger composition. This method suggests that in Shūbun's time, screen composition was still in a formative and transitional stage, leading to the development of an integrally conceived composition in the arts of Sesshū and the Kanō masters of the late Muromachi period.

This screen depicts a small, peaceful village nestled beside a stream at the foot of a tall mountain. In the left foreground a group of men unload goods from a boat. White flags fluttering at the doorways of two

buildings identify them as wine shops, and two gentlemen are being served in the distant one. Beyond this shop, houses and haystacks are visible, but a mountain blocks any further view into the distance. On the right of the screen, a gentleman, riding on a donkey and accompanied by a servant carrying an umbrella, approaches the village through a mountain pass, its low level contrasting sharply with the height and bulk of the mountain at the left.

This close view of a small mountain village differs significantly from other screens attributed to Shūbun, which usually employ a more complex compositional scheme centered around a broad expanse of water. Most Shūbun-attributed screens either include seasonal references or depict scenes from the famous Chinese landscape painting theme *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang* (see no. 34). This screen deviates from the usual type, for its scene is a screen-size copy of a small section of a handscroll painting attributed to Hsia Kuei, a Chinese painter of the Southern Sung dynasty in the late twelfth century. The Hsia Kuei handscroll, *Pure and Remote Views of Streams and Hills*, was copied many times by many artists, and several versions are known today. One is in the collection of the National Palace Museum in Taiwan,<sup>8</sup> and a second version, which differs slightly from the Taiwan scroll, is a fragment in the Asano collection.<sup>9</sup> Our screen includes almost the entire scene shown in the Asano fragment, with only minor changes, such as the elimination of a bridge and the addition of certain other elements to create a more compact composition.

The arrangement of land masses at the left and the position of two men walking on the right suggest that this composition should continue to the right on another screen. A second screen also belongs to the Burke collection, but it is obviously a later replacement—executed, perhaps, by a sixteenth-century follower of Shūbun. The screens bear no signature or seals that would suggest Shūbun's authorship, but both screens were authenticated by Kanō Yasunobu (1613–1685), who placed the attribution signature and his own name and seals on each of the pair. Since the styles of Yasunobu's calligraphy on the two screens are identical, the two screens must have formed a pair when Yasunobu examined them.

Kanō Tan'yū (1602–1674) made a copy of the Asano scroll in the seventeenth century, when it was already



in fragmentary condition.<sup>10</sup> Although the Tan'yū copy is a bit larger than the extant Asano fragment, the scene depicted on the right screen in the Burke collection is not found in the Tan'yū version. Fortunately for our study, however, the right-hand composition of the Burke screen is identical to a section of the Taiwan handscroll. This scene in the Taiwan scroll is continued to the left to a bird's-eye view of a broad river, which is cut off dramatically by a steep precipice. The massive mountain in the left background of the left-hand screen here is found in neither the Asano nor the Taiwan scrolls. This element was introduced as a background for the stream and the village shown in the foreground, giving a strong vertical accent to an otherwise flat landscape and clarifying the terminal point of the composition. Although the style of the right-hand screen is coarse when compared to its companion on the left, we may assume that it, too, retains many compositional features of the archetype that was lost from the Asano fragment. This fragment was probably much larger at least until the first half of the fifteenth century, when the Burke screens were painted.

Kanō Yasunobu, who attributed these screens to Shūbun, was a younger brother of Tan'yū, who copied the Asano fragment. The relationship between the two artists in respect to the two paintings reveals the working methods of Japanese ink painters. Artists of the Kanō school trained themselves by copying ancient masterpieces from China and Japan, and artists of the Muromachi period generally relied on Chinese models, especially the works of Southern Sung painters like

Hsia Kuei. In fact, scholars have always recognized in the paintings associated with Shūbun's name a notable influence of the Hsia Kuei style. There is valuable evidence in support of that contention in this work.

1. The most thorough study of Shūbun's life is in Watanabe Hajime, *Higashiyama Suiboku-ga no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1948); a summary of these findings are in Ichimatsu Tanaka, *Japanese Ink Painting: Shūbun to Sesshū*, The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art (Tokyo, 1972).
2. This colophon is included in the Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed. *Son'an Shōkō*, Zoku Gunsho Ruijū, vol. XII/2 (Tokyo, 1927), pp. 524-525.
3. Bussho Kankō-kai, ed., *Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho*, 3 vols. (Tokyo, 1944).
4. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Kam'mon Gyoki* (Tokyo, 1944).
5. Yamaoka Taizō, "An Introduction to the History of Suiboku Paintings in the Muromachi Period," *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 79 (April 1971), pp. 65-66.
6. Kuksa P'yonch'an Wiwonhoe, ed., *Choson Wangjo Sillok* Seoul, 1955-1958), II, pp. 575, 577.
7. Matsushita Takaaki and Tamamura Takeji, *Josetsu, Shūbun, San-Ami*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikei, vol. VI (Tokyo, 1974), pp. 41-44.
8. *Chinese Art Treasures: A Selected Group of Objects from the Chinese National Palace Museum and the Chinese National Central Museum, Taichung, Taiwan* (1961), no. 57; Editorial Committee of the Joint Board of Directors of the National Palace Museum and the National Central Museum, eds., *Three Hundred Masterpieces of Chinese Painting in the Palace Museum, Taipei* (1959), III, no. 115.
9. Tanaka, *Japanese Ink Painting*, fig. 118.
10. *Kinsei Gonin no Kyoshō-ten* (exh. cat., Matsuya Department Store, Tokyo, 1969), no. pl. no.

## Early Spring Landscape

Muromachi period

Hidemori (active, first half of the fifteenth century)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

H. 74.5 x W. 27.7 cm (29<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 10<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

Colophon by Sesshin

SEALS: "Hidemori," "Sesshin," and [illegible]

PUBLISHED: Matsushita Takaaki and Tamamura

Takeji, *Josetsu, Shūbun, San-Ami*, Suiboku Bijutsu

Taiki, vol. VI (Tokyo, 1974), pl. 64: Matsushita

Takaaki, "On Several Paintings by Hidemori,"

*Bukkyō Geijutsu* 69 (December 1968), no pl. no.;

Matsushita Takaaki, *Muromachi Suiboku-ga*

(*Suiboku Paintings of the Muromachi Period*)

(Tokyo, 1960), pls. 29, 30.

A four-line poem gives a charming description of the simple landscape represented beneath it:

To the south and north of the river on a day when  
the snow is clearing,  
Mist covers the mountains and spring color is  
bright.  
Barefooted folk still walk with slow and heavy  
steps.  
Guests, gazing through the open window, are  
delighted.  
The stream flowing under the mountain bridge  
bubbles over cold stones.  
Pines whispering over the roof of the house make  
music without the help of strings.  
Why is the boat anchored at the rock?  
I know it has traveled ten thousand miles.

Chōsetsu-shi

Inside a hut extending over the water, two gentlemen sit looking toward the calm river, where two fishermen are working from a boat. In the lower right corner, two small figures converge on the path along the river's edge, near the point where a second boat is moored. Across the water, beyond a small wooden bridge, the distant shoreline and tall mountain peaks are enveloped in a gentle gray mist.





The colophon signature, “Chōsetsu-shi,” means “a fisherman in snow.” Seals have been impressed at the beginning and end of the composition. The rectangular seal is not legible, but the round one under the signature has been deciphered as “Sesshin.”<sup>1</sup> The name “Sesshin,” sometimes written “Sesshin Tōhaku,” appears in several contemporary documents in reference to a scholarly Zen monk of the fifteenth century. In 1446 Sesshin was reported to have been appointed forty-ninth abbot of Shōkokuji, the official temple of the Ashikaga shoguns. Shortly thereafter, he became the one-hundred-twenty-ninth abbot of Tenryūji. His age upon his death in 1459 was reported as seventy or seventy-seven.

A round seal reading “Sesshin” is also known to have been used by a man who used the acronym “Dokuchō-shi” (“a lone angler”). His signature appears on a colophon on an ink landscape painting owned by the Tokiwayama Bunko, a private foundation in Kamakura.<sup>2</sup> Although the seal on the Tokiwayama painting is not identical to the one here, the calligraphic styles of the two colophons are very close, and since both signatures are pseudonyms referring to fishing, they probably belonged to the same person. Although it is not known whether Sesshin Tōhaku used the names “Chōsetsu-shi” or “Dokuchō-shi,” it was common practice for high-ranking monks in the fifteenth century to write colophons on paintings, and it may well have been Sesshin Tōhaku who executed the colophon here.

Both paintings show a stylistic dependence on the *shiga-jiku* type of paintings. *Shiga-jiku* are usually tall and narrow, with lengthy poetic compositions covering the greater portion of the scroll and a small painting

below as here. The strong asymmetry of the composition is a common device in *shiga-jiku* landscapes, and the brush technique recalls the style ascribed to the elusive master Shūbun (see no. 32): the large rock, house, and tree on the right are darkly outlined and are filled with wet strokes in varying hues of ink, while broad washes are used to define the low-lying shore on the opposite side, the tall mountains, and trees half-hidden in hazy mist.

The background of the artist, Hidemori, whose seal is impressed on the right of the painting, is completely unknown, but several paintings with this seal have recently been recovered. Matsushita Takaaki has suggested that the “Hidemori” seal is another one used by Sesshin Tōhaku.<sup>3</sup> Although the seal is not found on the painting in the Tokiwayama collection, the style of this painting closely resembles other pictures with the “Hidemori” seal. Two of the six known paintings with the “Hidemori” seal have colophons written by Sesshin Tōhaku, the only colophon-writer known to have collaborated with the painter Hidemori. It is possible that Sesshin Tōhaku not only composed the colophon and brushed it, but that he also executed the painting. Sesshin’s tenure at Shōkokuji also coincided with the period when Shūbun worked as the shogun’s official artist, offering a possible explanation for the close stylistic similarities between the works of the two artists.

1. Matsushita Takaaki, *Muromachi Suiboku-ga (Suiboku Painting of the Muromachi Period)* (Tokyo, 1960), pl. 29.
2. Hisao Sugahara, *Japanese Ink Painting and Calligraphy* (New York, 1967), no. 15.
3. Matsushita Takaaki, “On Several Paintings by Hidemori,” *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 69 (December 1968), pp. 135–143.



Two Views from the *Shō-shō Hakkei*  
(*Eight Views at the Confluence of the*  
*Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*)

Muromachi period

Kantei (active, fifteenth century)

Hanging scrolls; ink and light color on paper

Right scroll, H. 46 x W. 30.1 cm (18 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 11 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.);

left scroll, H. 47.6 x W. 30.1 cm (18 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 11 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.)

SEAL: "Kantei" on both scrolls

EX COLLECTIONS: Kusaba Akira; Hachisuka Yoshiaki,  
Tokyo

PUBLISHED: Shūjirō Shimada, *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 121; Matsushita Takaaki, *Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1967), 13, fig. 121; Matsushita Takaaki, *Muromachi Suiboku-ga (Suiboku Painting of the Muromachi Period)* (Tokyo, 1960), pl. 35; Muraki Chii, "Kusaba Akira Shi," *Nihon Bijutsu Kōgei* 260 (May 1960), fig. 4; Hasumi Shigeyasu, "Nara Hōgen Kantei," *Nihon Bijutsu Kyōkai Hōkoku* 38 (October 1935), pp. 1-7; Tajima Shiichi, ed., *Shimbi Taikan* (Kyoto, 1902), VIII, no. 22; "Kantei," *Kokka* 105 (June 1898), pp. 167, 169.

In the right-hand scroll, a gentleman traveler astride a donkey and his attendant following on foot have just come into view as they approach the bend of a path beneath an overhanging cliff. Beyond a small bridge rises an imposing city gate with crenelated walls, and a full harvest moon hangs over trees shrouded in mist. In the left-hand scroll, snow-covered mountains tower behind a forested village. A farmer, riding backwards on his water buffalo, returns home after his day in the fields. The bent branches of a naked willow tree in the foreground repeat the curved formation of a flock of geese flying into the distance.

In an article published in 1898, these two paintings were treated as a diptych.<sup>1</sup> Recently, they were identified as two scenes from a series of the famous *Eight Views at the Confluence of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*,<sup>2</sup> one of the most popular themes in traditional Chinese poetry and landscape painting. The series depicts

villages and mountains clustered in the mist at the meeting point of two rivers that feed the Yang-tzu River in south China, the Hsiao and the Hsiang. In contrast to the arid, harsh geography of the north, the landscape of south China, especially along the lower reaches of the Yang-tzu, is noted for its gentle topography and humid climate. Landscape paintings of the scenery around the Hsiao and the Hsiang rivers evoke a sense of vaporous instability. The *Eight Views* are sometimes grouped according to the seasons;<sup>3</sup> spring: *Mountain Village on a Clear Day*, *Night Rain over the Hsiao and the Hsiang*; summer: *Homeward-bound Sails off a Distant Coast*, *Evening Glow over a Fishing Village*; autumn: *Autumn Moon over Tung-t'ing Lake*, *Wild Geese Alighting on a Sand Bar*; and winter: *Evening Snow on the Mountains*, *Evening Bell from a Distant Temple*. With the exceptions of *Night Rain over the Hsiao and the Hsiang* and *Autumn Moon over Tung-t'ing Lake*, the titles do not refer to specific locations. As Osvald Sirén has pointed out, the *Eight Views* are "... useful as labels or keys to the ideas traditionally associated with the motifs, but these ideas were interpreted by each painter according to his creative imagination quite independently of any local color or descriptive elements."<sup>4</sup>

It is not certain when or by whom the *Eight Views* were established as a set of motifs for poetry and painting.<sup>5</sup> Mi Fei (1051-1107), a member of the literati and one of the foremost painters of the late Northern Sung period, wrote poems about the *Eight Views*. He attributed the origin of this theme to Li Ch'eng (919-967). However, Sung Ti, a renowned Southern Sung artist and a pupil of Li Ch'eng, is generally thought to have originated this theme in painting. Sung Ti was posted in the south for some time as a government official. Although his paintings of the *Eight Views* no longer exist, they are mentioned in contemporary literature, such as the poems of Su Shih (1036-1101), who was the leading poet of his time. The earliest extant Chinese paintings of this subject are works from the thirteenth century by the Ch'an monks Mu-ch'i and Yü-chien. In their paintings, villages, mountains, temple buildings, and fishing boats are seen through clouds that shift with the progress of the seasons. The ink-splash tech-





nique of these paintings—a rapid application of dark ink over lighter ink washes—is an appropriate device for depicting a hazy atmosphere in soft light.

The *Kundaikan Sayūchō Ki*<sup>6</sup> and the *Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku*,<sup>7</sup> two mid-fifteenth-century records of Chinese paintings in Japanese collections, refer to paintings with a theme from the *Eight Views*. Japanese artists must have been familiar with this subject at least a century before the compilation of these catalogues, however, because one theme of the *Eight Views* is depicted in an early fourteenth-century Japanese painting in the Satomi collection, Kyoto.<sup>8</sup> It was painted by Shitan sometime before 1317, and its theme is clearly identified in the colophon as the *Wild Geese Alighting on a Sand Bar*. Traditionally, Japanese artists included references to seasonal changes when depicting the scenery of their country, and they found this was ideal for the decoration of large screens. The theme of the *Eight Views* appealed to their sensitivity to nature, and it quickly gained popularity among Japanese ink painters. The scenes on many folding and sliding screens with landscapes as yet unidentified may ultimately be recognized as paintings of the *Eight Views*.

Pictorial motifs in the two paintings shown here correspond to the type of standard imagery depicted in the *Eight Views*. The right-hand scroll, showing a lake and a full moon rising, could be an illustration of the fifth theme, *Autumn Moon over Tung-t'ing Lake*. The left-hand scroll, showing wild geese flying past snow-covered mountains, may be related either to the theme of *Wild Geese Alighting on a Sand Bar*, or to *Evening Snow on the Hills*. The numerals four and six are written on the back of the paintings directly underneath the Kantei seal. Three other paintings by Kantei, which are in Japanese collections, have numerals written on the reverse sides in the same manner.<sup>9</sup> The numerals may be a later addition: they do not correspond with the expected sequence of the seasonal grouping. But since the sizes of these five paintings are similar, it may be that they once formed a set of the *Eight Views*.

The artist, Kantei, like many other fifteenth-century Japanese painters, is known to us only through his work. His biography was not recorded until the Edo period, when Kantei is linked with Tōshōdaiji in Nara. This temple may have honored Kantei in his lifetime with the priestly title Nara Hōgen, and there is indeed a painting with Kantei's seal in the Tōshōdaiji collection.<sup>10</sup> Otherwise, his connection with this temple re-

mains ambiguous. In the Edo period, Kantei was thought to be the priest-painter Bokkei (d. 1478), the artist of Shūbun's portrait (see no. 32). Bokkei was closely associated with the eccentric Zen monk Ikkyū Sōjun (1394–1481), who took up residence at Daitokuji in Kyoto in 1474. Previously Ikkyū lived at Shūon-an, a temple near Nara. A connection, however tenuous, between Kantei and Daitokuji is possible if Kantei lived in Nara and was acquainted with Ikkyū before the latter moved to Daitokuji. Kantei may be related to Daitokuji in an artistic sense as well. His paintings are often described as showing an affinity with the work of Soga Jasoku (or Dasoku) who painted the beautiful screens at Shinju-an, a subtemple of Daitokuji. However, these two paintings may be more closely related to Sesshū's works.<sup>11</sup> The emphatic outlines and architectonic structuring of pictorial elements by overlapping planes, which are strikingly noticeable features of this pair, are typical of Kantei's style. In this respect, they resemble Sesshū's famous *Winter Landscape* in the Tokyo National Museum and also have some similarity with Sesshū's copy of a painting by Hsia Kuei in the Asano collection, Tokyo.<sup>12</sup>

1. "Kantei," *Kokka* 105 (June 1898), p. 169.
2. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hihō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), I (text), p. 121.
3. Nakajima Junji, "The Influence of Hanging Scrolls on the Screen Format," *Bijutsu Shi* 61 (June 1966), pp. 1–17.
4. Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (London, 1956), II, pp. 140–141.
5. Shūjirō Shimada, "Sung Ti and Eight Views of Hsiao and Hsiang," *Nanga Kanshō* X/4 (April 1941), pp. 6–13; Suzuki Kei, "Eight Views of Hsiao and Hsiang: Mu-ch'i and Yü-chien," *Kobijutsu* 2 (April 1963), pp. 41–45.
6. Wakimoto Sokurō, "Kundaikan Sayūchō Ki (Tokyo Imperial University Version)," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 20 (August 1933), pp. 375–388.
7. Tani Shin'ichi, "Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 58 (October 1936), pp. 439–447.
8. Kanazawa Hiroshi, *Shoki Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 69, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1972), fig. 20.
9. Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hihō*, I (text), p. 121.
10. Ishida Mosaku, *Tōshōdaiji* (Tokyo, 1955), pl. 54, fig. 4.
11. Barbara Brennan Ford, "The Eight Views of Hsiao and Hsiang and Two Landscapes by Kantei in the Burke Collection," (term paper, Columbia University, 1970).
12. Tanaka Ichimatsu and Yonezawa Yoshiho, *Suiboku-ga*, Genshoku Nihon no Bijutsu, vol. XI (Tokyo, 1970), fig. 79. See also no. 32.

## Ink-splash Landscape

Muromachi period

Bokushō Shūshō (active, late fifteenth to early sixteenth century)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

H. 80 x W. 33.9 cm (31½ x 13⅜ in.)

SEAL: "Bokushō"

EX COLLECTIONS: Umezawa Kinenkan Museum, Tokyo; Moriya Kōzō, Kyoto

PUBLISHED: *Sesshū* (exh. cat., Hanshin Department Store, Osaka, 1971), pl. 24; Matsushita Takaaki, *Muromachi Suiboku-ga* (*Suiboku Painting of the Muromachi Period*) (Tokyo, 1960), pl. 43; "Landscape," *Kokka* 618 (May 1942), pl. 7.

A precarious precipice hangs over a river valley. Tall mountains enveloped in mist rise behind a lush growth of trees and lightly sketched houses, suggesting the damp atmosphere of a mountain village. The scene of natural stillness is broken by two small figures, a traveler crossing the bridge in the foreground and a man trudging up the mountain path at the right. With a few broad strokes of wet ink, varying in hue from pearl gray to coal black, Bokushō created the major elements of this simple, intimate composition.

The painting is one of a number of variations on Sesshū's famous landscape in the *haboku*, or "ink-splash" technique, which uses dark ink rapidly applied over still-wet, light washes to create a soft, diffused effect. It was given to his pupil, Sōen, as a farewell gift in 1495 and is now in the Tokyo National Museum. Bokushō's interpretation lacks some of the architectonic solidity that is characteristic of Sesshū's original composition, and is more lyrical than other *haboku* paintings by followers of Sesshū. By applying the darkest ink only in small, dotlike strokes, he accentuated an otherwise muted composition.

Bokushō Shūshō, a noted scholar and poet, was a high-ranking Zen priest who worked at Nanzenji and Shōkokuji in Kyoto. Later in his life he also lived at Hojuji in Yamaguchi prefecture at the western end of Honshū Island, where Sesshū lived after leaving Kyoto. The fact that the two men became close friends is doc-





umented by Bokushō's colophon on a Sesshū painting now in the collection of Ōhara Sōichirō in Okayama,<sup>1</sup> and it is possible that Sesshū instructed Bokushō in painting.

This painting bears a strong resemblance to another ink-splash masterpiece executed by a mid-thirteenth-century Chinese painter named Yü-chien. Yü-chien's painting is one of the most celebrated examples of the ink-splash technique. The Yü-chien painting also includes a poetic colophon entitled *Mountain Village on a Clear Day*, a theme from the *Eight Views of the*

*Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (no. 34). Since many Japanese ink landscapes of the Muromachi period seem to have been inspired by this famous set of eight Chinese scenes, it is quite possible that Bokushō's painting was also inspired by a scene of this group of eight, even if it was not composed as part of a set.

1. Ichimatsu Tanaka, *Japanese Ink Painting: Shūbun to Sesshū*, The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art (Tokyo, 1972), fig. 119.





## Plum Blossoms

Muromachi period

Bokusai Shōtō (d. 1492)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

W. 42.4 x H. 27.3 cm (16¾ x 10¾ in.)

SEAL: "Shōtō"

Plum blossoms were a common theme of literati painting in China, which accorded the highest esteem to works by educated amateurs. Plum flowers, the first harbinger of spring, are regarded as a symbol of rejuvenation; beginning in the Sung dynasty, the triad known as the *Three Worthies*—plum, bamboo, and pine—was a favorite subject of gentleman-scholar painters. These "amateur" painters regarded monochrome depictions, especially of bamboo and plums, as the final test of an artist's technical and spiritual understanding of ink and brush. Ink paintings of bamboo are believed to have been painted as early as the late T'ang

dynasty, but no mention of monochrome plum paintings is known in literature until the late Northern Sung dynasty. Chung-jen, a Northern Sung Ch'an monk, is generally considered to have been the first artist to experiment with this subject.<sup>1</sup> The genre was later brought to its maturity by a Southern Sung artist, Yang Pu-chih (d. 1169). Plums almost replaced bamboo as a favorite subject of painting by literati artists during the Southern Sung dynasty. Traditional painting manuals emphasize the theory that the secrets of painting plums, as well as bamboo, are best learned by studying them when silhouetted against a moonlit wall, and a special type of plum painting with shadows of blossoms against a wall became popular.

Chinese ink paintings of plum blossoms were introduced to Japan in the Kamakura period, and some of those collected by the Hōjō family are recorded in their early fourteenth-century catalogue, the *Butsunichi-an Kōmotsu Mokuroku*.<sup>2</sup> Plum blossoms held a special appeal for Zen monks, who frequently com-



posed poems about plums or wrote colophons on plum paintings. Particularly well known among the priests who favored this flower was Ikkyū Sōjun (1394–1481), who was abbot of Daitokuji in Kyoto, and earned a reputation for his unorthodox opinions and eccentric behavior.<sup>3</sup> Ikkyū composed numerous poems about this first spring flower; about ten percent of the poems in the *Kyōun Shū*, a collection of Ikkyū's literary works, were inspired by living plum blossoms or by paintings of them.<sup>4</sup>

Here, the trunk of an old plum tree is framed in a softly shaded circle, as though viewed through a round window that opens onto the dark of night. Only a portion of the large trunk is visible, but three young blossom-laden branches are in full view. Restraint in the handling of brush and ink conveys the feeling of stillness in a spring evening. The painting is pregnant with allusions, both secular and religious. The poem accompanying the painting reads:

I walk over the stream and garden in search  
of flowers.  
The plum tree stands tall and welcomes the  
immortals.  
Its elegant appearance in winter surpasses its peers.  
Fragrance that lingers even after three bathings  
is unique to this flower.  
Peonies are supreme as the flowers of the rich.  
Jasmine is superior as the flower of purity.  
But these are inferior to this earliest one  
of flowers.

For it captures the spring of myriad blossoms.

The circular "frame" can be variously interpreted. In traditional religious iconography, the halo placed behind icons is the most obvious use of a circle. Buddhist and Shinto deities in Japan are sometimes represented within a circular format to represent the idea of heavenly bodies remote from the ordinary world. At other times, a circle can symbolize a mirror, which reflects the true image. The circle was also used in Zen art as a symbol of the primary Zen principle of perfection and completion.

Bokusai, to whom the painting is attributed, was also known by the religious name, Botsurin (or Motsurin) Shōtō. He was a disciple of Ikkyū, and the facts best known about his life concern his close relationship with the master. Bokusai was first associated with the Tenryūji temple in Kyoto, but he later shifted his alle-

giance to Ikkyū, and he moved to Daitokuji, perhaps in 1452, to live with Ikkyū. Nothing is known about Bokusai prior to this conversion, but he seems to have shown complete devotion to Ikkyū. Bokusai compiled the *Ikkyū Oshō Nempu*,<sup>5</sup> a short biography of Ikkyū, and is generally thought to be the artist of the sketch-like portrait of Ikkyū in the Tokyo National Museum. He also became the first abbot of the Shinju-an, a mortuary temple built for Ikkyū in 1491 at Daitokuji. Shinju-an's painted wall decoration has made it one of the most important artistic monuments within the Daitokuji compound.

It is fitting that Bokusai should have painted this picture of the plum blossom, the favorite subject of his master. The painting is not signed, but the colophon written on the picture may be attributed to Bokusai, since its calligraphic style echoes the style of Ikkyū and the "Shōtō" seal of Bokusai is impressed at the end of the colophon. The attribution nevertheless remains somewhat problematical, since the colophon and seal are not in their original positions, although their paper is identical to that of the painting. They appear to have been moved to their present positions in a recent remounting, probably in an attempt to make the entire composition more tightly organized to fit the format of a small hanging scroll.



1. Excellent discussions on the history of ink plum paintings are: Shūjirō Shimada, "A Preface by Chung-jen, Part I," *Hōun* 25 (1939), pp. 21–34; "Part II," *Hōun* 30 (1943), pp. 50–68; Tanaka Toyozō, "Ink Paintings of Plum in the Sung Dynasty, Part I," *Gasetu* 32 (August 1939), pp. 733–743; "Part II," *Gasetu* 33 (September 1939), pp. 808–814; Aoki Masaru, "Origin of the Ink Paintings of the Four Worthies," *Bunka* 11-11 (November 1935), pp. 1274–1290.
2. Kamakura-shi Shi Hensan Iin-kai, ed., *Kamakura-shi Shi: Shiryō Hen*, II (Tokyo, 1964), pp. 200–212.
3. *Yamato Bunka: Special Number Devoted to the Portraits, Autobiographic Writing and Poetical Works of the Zen-priest Ikkyū* 41 (August 1964); Donald Keene, "The Portrait of Ikkyū," *Archives of Asian Art* XX (1966/1967), pp. 54–65.
4. Itō Toshiko, "Several Manuscripts of Kyōun Shū," *Yamato Bunka* 41 (August 1964), pp. 10–17; Itō Toshiko, "The Revised Text of Kyōun Shū," *Yamato Bunka* 41 (August 1964), pp. 18–59; Okumura Jūbei, *Kyōun Shū* (Kyoto, 1966).
5. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū*, IX/2 (Tokyo, 1927), pp. 744–766.

## Pair of Wagtails

Muromachi period

Shōkei (d. about 1508)

Diptych of hanging scrolls; ink on paper

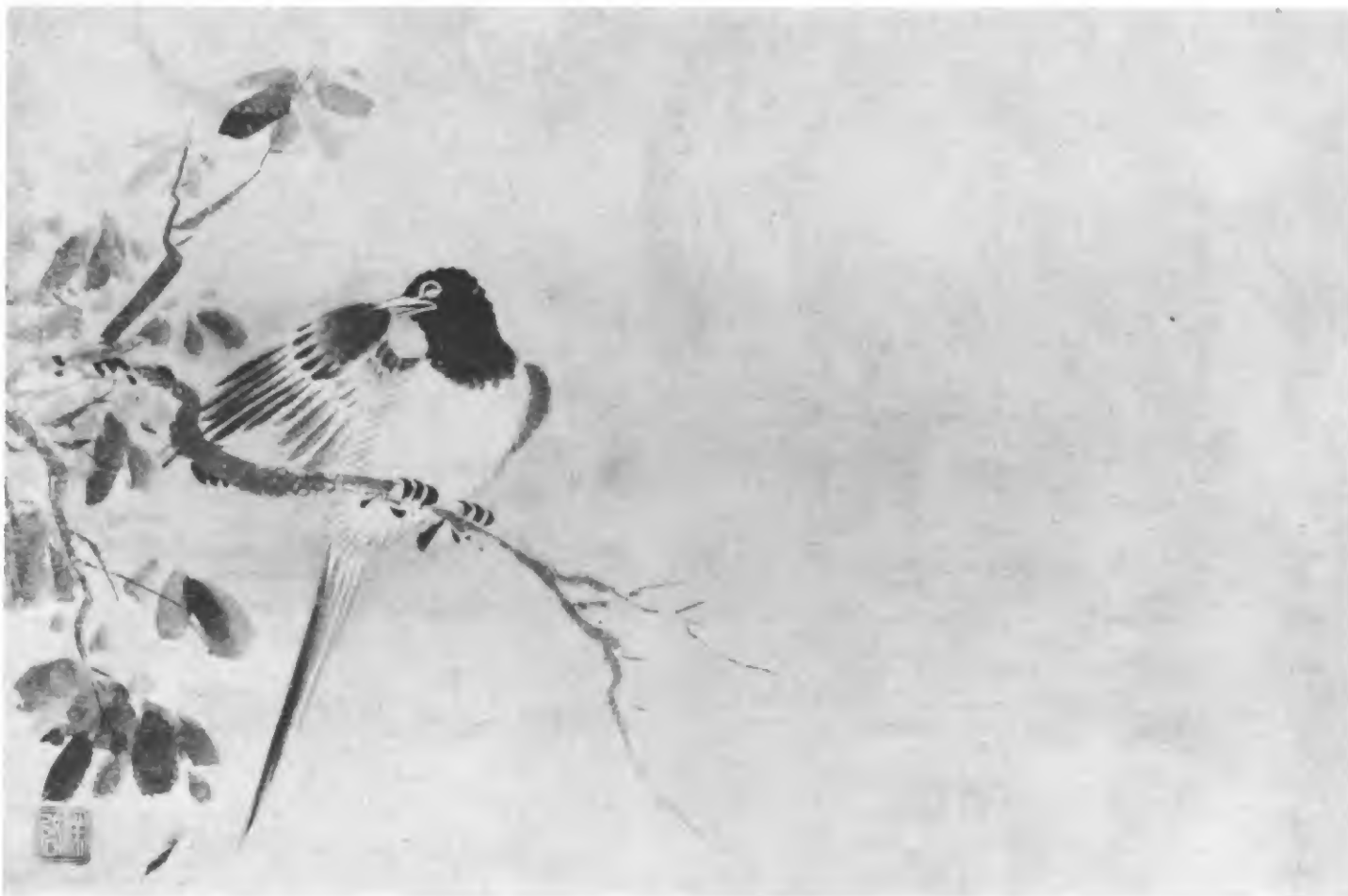
Each scroll, W. 58 x H. 38.5 (22<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SEAL: "Shōkei" on both scrolls

PUBLISHED: Kanagawa Kenritsu Hakubutsu-kan, ed.,  
*Kamakura no Suiboku-ga* (Tokyo, 1972), fig. 62.

Two longtailed birds, captured in a vibrant mood, perch on bare tree limbs that spread into a large void. The contrast of pictorial elements in these two paintings was carefully planned. In the scroll on the right, the tree branch turns sharply upward, while the bird, its body nimbly twisted to the right, appears ready to swoop down on some prey in the bamboo grove. On the left, the second bird sits upright on a limb that bends down, adjusting its feathers while chirping toward the leafy bush on the left. The eye is directed vertically and horizontally, from a gnarled old stump surrounded by sharp-edged leaves of bamboo to a young broadleafed tree, and from the bird perched in cheerful repose to one poised in sharp-eyed readiness.

The exclusive use of so-called "boneless"—broad and supple—brushstrokes occurs only rarely in Shōkei's œuvre. His flower and bird paintings, in particular, are usually executed in a minutely detailed polychrome style that is believed to have been characteristic of the mode formulated by the Sung Academy of China. The artist Keison who was one of Shōkei's pupils (see no. 38), once painted a triptych showing the Chinese sixth patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism, Hui-neng (Enō, in Japanese), with a faggot of wood on his back, in the center and a bird on each of the side panels.<sup>1</sup> The wagtails of this set duplicate the birds in Shōkei's diptych, except that their postures are reversed. In Keison's paintings, the bare branches are often interpreted as symbolic of Hui-neng's devotion to menial labor, such as the gathering and selling of firewood. Although the format of Shōkei's two paintings is horizontal, this may be the result of a more recent remounting. Each scroll shows unusually heavy damage in the center, where another sheet of paper was joined. It is possible that these were



originally narrow and vertical scrolls on which Shōkei intended to illustrate one of the doctrines of Zen in the form of a triptych. It could explain Shōkei's departure from his usual detailed execution in the secular bird-and-flower genre in favor of simple monochrome and rapid brush technique, a style more appropriate to the expression of Zen inspiration.

Shōkei, like all ink painters of the Muromachi period, was a Zen monk. He worked as a scribe or clerk (*shoki*, in Japanese) at Kenchōji in Kamakura, and his second, more familiar name, Keishoki, combines a part of his own name, "Kei," with that of his position, "*shoki*." Shōkei may have learned to paint at Kenchōji as a student of Chūan Shinkō, leading master of ink painting around Kamakura, who held an important post at the temple. The turning point in Shōkei's career as a

painter, however, was a three-year stay in Kyoto. He traveled to the capital in 1478, where he came under the tutelage of Geiami (1431–1485), artist, connoisseur, and cultural advisor to the Ashikaga shoguns. Geiami was curator of their painting collection, and, as the priest Keijo Shūrin (1440–1518) recorded in his diary, the *Kanrin Koro Shū*,<sup>2</sup> Geiami was favorably impressed by Shōkei's artistic talent and let the young painter examine and copy all of the Chinese paintings in the shogunal collection. Since copying Chinese paintings was then considered the ideal training for an ink painter, access to the collection was an excellent opportunity. In 1480, when Shōkei was ready to return to Kamakura, Geiami presented him with one of his own paintings, *Waterfall Viewing*, which is now in the Nezu Museum in Tokyo. The presentation of a paint-



ing by a master to his pupil was the equivalent of conferring a diploma. In fact, a colophon on this painting inscribed by a monk, Ōsen Keisan (1429–1493), states that the painting was presented to Shōkei as a certificate endorsing the successful completion of his study.

Shōkei's period of study in Kyoto was probably undertaken with both personal and official aspirations. In cultural, political, and religious affairs, Kamakura enjoyed a brief period of dominance over Kyoto during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but in Shōkei's time the city was in decline. No doubt his superiors at Kenchōji encouraged him to go to Kyoto, and Shōkei returned from there in order to revitalize art in Kamakura. Unfortunately, few documents shed light on Shōkei's activities after he returned. He seems to have established an atelier and to have become a teacher

there, because the names of many artists from this area include the same "Kei" of Shōkei's name. Paintings by these artists show Shōkei's influence, and he is often said to have established a distinctive local style of ink painting in this area. For reasons as yet undetermined, Shōkei returned to Kyoto in 1493. He established a studio there, calling it the Hinraku-sai ("poverty-loving studio"), where he lived until his death. He apparently received the respect and affection of scholarly monks in the capital, since his name and studio are mentioned in the *Kanrin Koro Shū*.<sup>3</sup>

1. "Priest Yenō as a Faggot-seller and the Birds by Keison," *Kokka* 436 (March 1927), p. 77.
2. Kamimura Kankō, ed., *Gozan Bungaku Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1936), IV, p. 383.
3. Ibid.

## Landscape of the Four Seasons

Muromachi period

Keison (active, late fifteenth to early sixteenth century)

Diptych of hanging scrolls; ink on paper

Each scroll, H. 97.5 x W. 50 cm (38 $\frac{7}{16}$  x 19 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.)

SEALS: "Hōgen" and "Keison" on both scrolls

On the left scroll, a cold harvest moon hangs in mid-air over a flock of geese flying into the distance. Bare trees on the mountains in the background sag under the weight of winter snow, while in the foreground, some leafless branches jut out over the water. The pictorial elements representing the seasons of autumn and winter are concentrated on the left half of the scroll, leaving the right half to an open view of water.

Except for two tall pines in the center, the right-hand scroll repeats in reverse the composition of the companion piece, creating a continuous, wider vista of water in the center area when the two scrolls are hung together. Two large seals belonging to Keison, the artist of the paintings, are impressed at the top left-hand corner on the left scroll. The same seals are placed at the upper right-hand corner on the right scroll. The juxtaposition of seals and the balancing of the two compositions suggest that the scrolls, which were acquired in two separate purchases several years apart, may originally have been a diptych. If that was the case, the right-hand scroll, which has no overt seasonal imagery, must have been intended to represent spring and summer.

It is also possible that they may originally have belonged to a triptych. In a triptych of ink paintings by Keison, now in a private collection in Japan, the center panel represents an old Chinese fable called the *Three Laughters of Tiger Valley*, and its side panels show landscapes that are nearly mirror images of this diptych, except that they lack seasonal references.<sup>1</sup> The two sets are also stylistically parallel. Japanese artists and patrons often flanked paintings of Buddhist deities



with subjects taken from nature. The most famous and controversial example is a triptych of Chinese paintings now in Daitokuji, Kyoto, by the Southern Sung painter Mu-ch'i. The central panel represents the White-robed Kuan-yin (Byaku-e Kannon, in Japanese); the side pan-



els show monkeys and a crane. The earliest Japanese use of landscape views in such a triptych is a fourteenth-century Byaku-e Kannon with two landscapes painted by Ue Gukei (active, 1361–1375).<sup>2</sup> Keison once painted a triptych himself depicting a Ch'an patriarch,



accompanied by side panels showing birds.

While the compositions of the two landscape paintings shown here may contrast, stylistic homogeneity firmly unites them. Rocks, mountains, trees, and houses are sharply outlined; forms are clearly defined by bold angular brushstrokes and by the harsh contrast between dark and light inks. Mountains and houses have a sense of solid mass, and rocky hills in the background appear to be as hard as crystal. There is little sense of depth in these sturdily structured, crowded compositions. These features reflect the artist's dependence on a formula established by Shōkei and popularized in the region of Kamakura. Keison is often called the most faithful follower of Shōkei. As the first part of his name suggests, Keison was Shōkei's pupil. He became associated with this master perhaps after 1480, when Shōkei returned to Kamakura after completing his study with Geiami in Kyoto. No documents concerning Keison's life have yet been found, but paintings with his seals suggest that he was a versatile artist, at home with figure paintings, flower-and-bird genre, or landscapes. He sometimes painted in the soft, ink-splash style, but was equally adept at the strong, hard style of these landscapes.

1. Nakamura Tanio, *Sesson to Kantō Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 63, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1971), p. 95.
2. Jan Fontein and Money Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy* (Boston, 1970), nos. 35–36.



## Early Spring Landscape



Muromachi period

Shūtoku (active, first half of the sixteenth century)

Hanging scroll; ink and light wash of color on paper  
H. 71.1 x W. 40.6 cm (28 x 16 in.)

Colophons by Shikoku Kandō and Teihō Shōchū

SEAL: "Shūtoku"

PUBLISHED: Nakamura Tanio and Tanaka Ichimatsu,  
*Sesshū, Sesson, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikē*, vol. VII  
(Tokyo, 1973), pl. 80; Matsushita Takaaki, *Suiboku-  
ga, Nihon no Bijutsu*, 13, ed. staff of the National  
Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo,  
1967), fig. 88; Asaoka Okisada, ed., *Zōtei Koga Bikō*  
(Tokyo, 1912), II, p. 712.

The boat is anchored in the west.  
The season is spring, and the water is high.  
On the blue Hsiang River, the cabin blind is  
rolled up.  
If the easterly wind helps this young man,  
the boat will be able to sail at night,  
And his hair will shine like the frost  
of the Wu country under the silvery moonlight.

Kakyō Kansho Dōjin Kandō

Spring water almost reaches the sky,  
The boat is anchored, and the boatman sleeps  
peacefully.  
What would I want from my remaining life?  
I would simply follow the floating boat.  
Mountains are like beauties, and the Yang-tzu,  
white gulls.

Zen Fukuzan Shōchū

Steeply rising peaks tower over a tiny hut built at the base of the mountains near the edge of a river. A single boat is tied at the riverbank, and from behind a craggy rock topped by a few tenacious pines, a waterfall feeds the river. Across the calm water, a bridge joins two low-lying promontories, and in the distance the forest and hills are enveloped in mist. Bright blue applied to mountains, foliage, rocks, and even the curtains of the hut, enhances the sense of the energy and



freshness of an early spring day. The extreme asymmetrical placement of pictorial elements and the poetic colophons brushed at the top are elements similar to those of many fifteenth-century *shiga-jiku* ("scrolls of poetry and painting"), such as are often attributed to the great master Shūbun. Shūtoku's strong colors and bold brushstrokes, however, are characteristic of ink painting composed a century after Shūbun. The architectonic solidity of the composition, the contrast of light and dark that brings every element into clear focus, and the jagged edges of rocks and trees that turn corners with a sharp twist are reminiscent of the work of Sesshū, the great artist of the late fifteenth century.

Very little is known about Shūtoku. Fortunately, this painting is one of few in his œuvre with colophons that allow us to interpret his chronological place in Muromachi art. Both colophon writers once served as abbots of Kenchōji in Kamakura: Shikoku Kandō, who signed the first poem, was the one hundred and sixty-ninth abbot and was succeeded by the writer of the second poem, Teihō Shōchū. A painting by Senka, now in the Gotō Museum in Tokyo, also has a colophon by Shōchū, which is dated to 1538. Shūtoku's painting of *Hotei* in the Kubo collection, Osaka, was inscribed by another monk, Senrin Sokei, the eighty-fifth abbot of Daitokuji in Kyoto, who died in 1543. Some scholars speculate that although the second characters of their

names are written differently, a certain Shūtoku, member of the trade mission to China from 1539 to 1541 organized by the Ōuchi family and led by the priest Sakugen (1501–1579), may also be the monk-painter Shūtoku.<sup>1</sup> If true, this would establish the period of Shūtoku's activity as the first half of the sixteenth century.

Although the basis for their claims is not clear, several writers in the Edo and early Meiji periods identified Shūtoku as Sesshū's successor as master at the Unkoku-an, Sesshū's residence-studio in Yamaguchi prefecture.<sup>2</sup> If Shūtoku participated in the 1539 trade mission to China, he would have come into contact with the Ōuchi family, who were large landowners on southern Honshū Island, where Unkoku-an is located, and who were also devoted patrons of Sesshū. It may then have been possible that the Ōuchi introduced Shūtoku to Sesshū, before the older artist's death in 1506. Whatever the connection, Shūtoku's style reveals his familiarity with Sesshū's art.

1. Tanaka Ichimatsu and Nakamura Tanio, *Sesshū, Sesson*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikēi, vol. VII (Tokyo, 1973), pl. 80; Makita Tairyō, *Sakugen Nyūmin Ki no Kenkyū* (Kyoto, 1955), I, p. 179, *passim*.

2. Tanaka Kisaku, "Shūtoku, a Priest Painter of the Ashikaga Period," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 54 (June 1936), pp. 236–242.

## Landscape with Mansion

Muromachi period

Sesson (about 1504– about 1590)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on silk

W. 51.3 x 39.8 cm (20¼ x 15½ in.)

SEALS: Cauldron-shaped seal of “Sesson” and square seal of “Sesson”

PUBLISHED: Nakamura Tanio, *Sesson to Kantō*

*Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 63, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1971), fig. 24; Matsushita Takaaki, *Muromachi Suiboku-ga (Suiboku Painting of the Muromachi Period)* (Tokyo, 1960), pls. 70, 71.

Sesson was a Zen priest-painter who lived most of his life in northeast Japan and never associated with Zen circles in Kyoto; yet he became an exceptional figure in medieval Japanese ink painting. Sources about Sesson's early life conflict about the date and place of his birth,<sup>1</sup> but it is generally agreed today that he was born in 1504 in a small town called Ōta in Hitachi province (modern Ibaragi prefecture, north of Tokyo). His father was a member of the powerful Satake family, a warrior clan that controlled a large fief in that region, and because he preferred Sesson's half-brother as his heir, Sesson left home as a young man to enter the priesthood in a Zen temple. Sesson seems to have learned to paint in his youth, and reports indicate that he then earned his living for a time selling painted fans near his hometown. By 1542 he had established a reputation as a painter of talent and insight and wrote a brief treatise on painting entitled *Setsu Montei Shi*.<sup>2</sup> In this document, written in the form of admonitions to his pupils, Sesson discusses several artistic problems, such as studying from nature, copying the paintings of old masters, and the expression of individuality. He also proclaims his admiration for Sesshū and records that he has studied the paintings of the great master he never had the chance to meet.

In 1542 Sesson still lived in Hetare, a town not far from his birthplace, but he soon took up the life of a wandering priest-artist. His activities began to appear

in various literary documents connected with Zen monks and local warlords. By 1546 he is known to have moved further north to Aizu Wakamatsu (in modern Fukushima prefecture), where, it is reported, he gave painting lessons to Ashina Moriuji, the lord of the fief. Some local citizens must then have acquired some of Sesson's paintings, since regional records refer to a few of them. Within a few years Sesson moved southward to Odawara, seat of the Hōjō government near Hakone and Kamakura. By 1550 he had established close relationships with important Zen monks in that area. In the summer of 1550, for example, he painted a *chinsō* (“portrait of a Zen master”) of Iten Sōsei (1472–1554), who had come from Daitokuji in Kyoto to establish Sōunji in Odawara. Also, his painting of a mythological bird, the *haha-chō* (now in the Tokiwayama Bunko, Kamakura) must date to that period, since it bears an inscription of 1555 written by the priest Emō of Enkakuji in Kamakura. Sesson's activity in the area was not confined to painting; he is known to have instructed Hōjō Ujimasa, lord of Odawara, in Zen Buddhism.

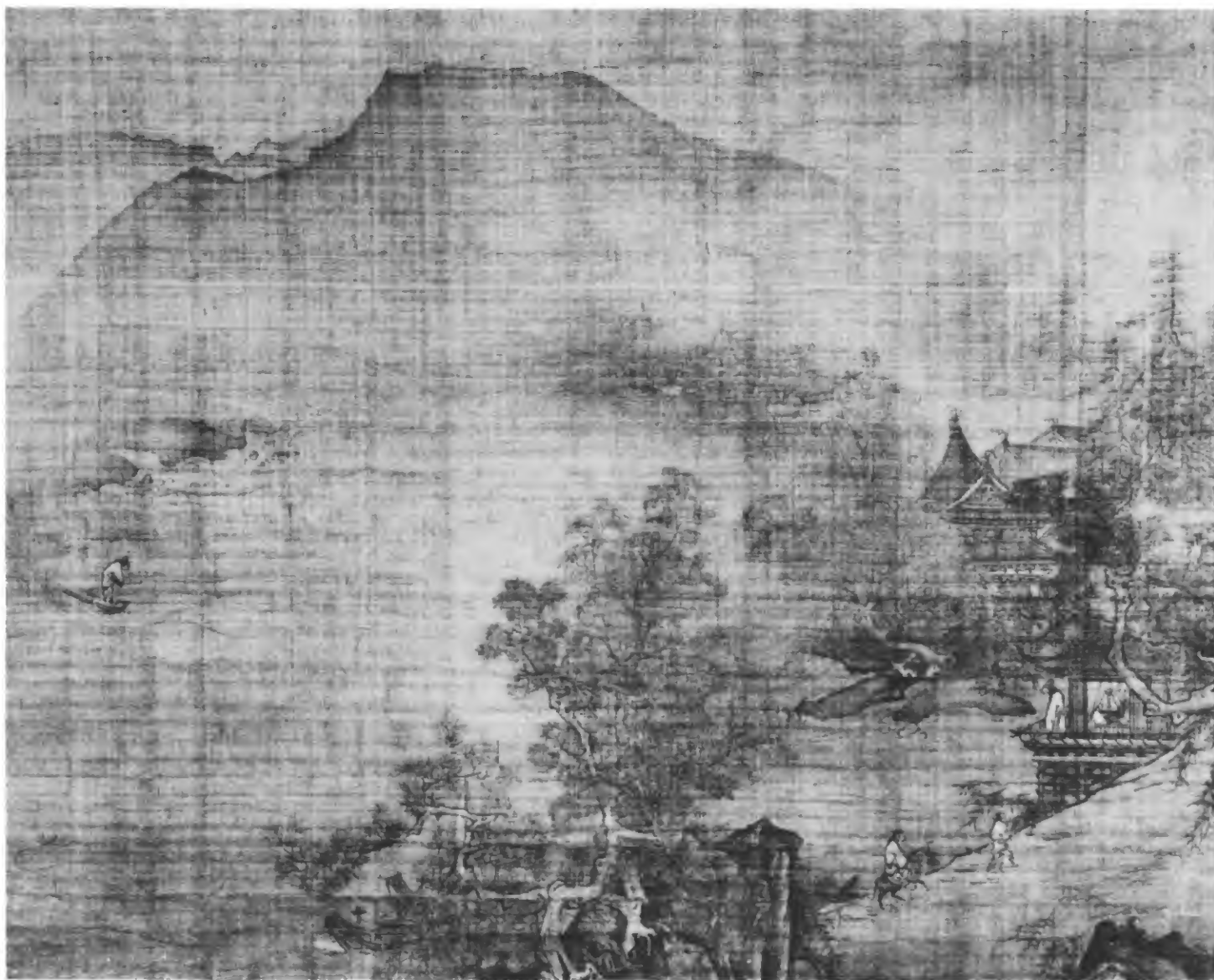
In Sesson's day, the cities of Kamakura and Odawara formed a cultural center in eastern Japan that was independent of the traditional capital, Kyoto. The personal histories of some Kanō painters from this area, such as those of Gyokuraku and Shuboku, are slowly emerging from oblivion, and scholars have recently begun to recognize a regional style of ink painting distinctive to the medieval eastern capital. This region seems to have been culturally congenial to Sesson, since he spent at least twelve years here. Through personal contacts he must have gained access to the significant collections of Chinese and Japanese paintings belonging to the Hōjō family and Zen temples, which were made available for his study. Sometime after 1561 Sesson returned northward to Aizu, and around 1563 he settled in the small town of Himaru (in Fukushima prefecture) near his birthplace, where he remained until he was at least eighty years old. It is not known exactly when Sesson died.

A chronological development of Sesson's art is difficult to trace, especially before its maturity, because very little data is available from his early period. Recent studies show that paintings with historical data are

largely confined to his last twenty years, from the 1570s until his death around 1590.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of the *chinsō* of 1550, Sesson did not sign his paintings in his early years.<sup>4</sup> During his seventies and later, he regularly signed his works, sometimes even stating his age. Recent study by Tanaka Ichimatsu suggests that Sesson's different seals and signature styles may be directly related to changes in his painting style.<sup>5</sup> Thus, it

may be possible to reconstruct a chronology through a study of Sesson's seals and signature styles.

The three paintings nos. 40–42 reflect the work of Sesson's early and middle periods. *The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove* (no. 41), an unsigned work, includes two seals, both identical to those found on the portrait of Iten Sōsei, which dates to 1550. One of these, a cauldron-shaped seal, also appears on the paint-



ing of the *baba-chō*, which is dated to 1555. The landscape painting on silk has different seals, but the style of the painting and the absence of a signature indicates that it, too, belongs to his early years. On the other hand, the seal reading “Shūkei,” which is impressed on no. 42, a landscape painted on paper, is commonly found on Sesson’s later works, frequently in combination with other seals. On this painting, however, the seal is used alone, a practice of Sesson’s middle period, perhaps when he was in his sixties.

The contrast of two triangles diametrically placed at the lower right and upper left is a formula derived from Southern Sung painting. In the center foreground, two large gnarled and sturdy trees rise out of the rocks, and two fishing boats lie moored in their shade at the left. The pictorial elements in the lower right are viewed at close range and are delineated in strong, clear brushstrokes. With his servant leading the way, a traveler on a donkey progresses to the right up a sloping mountain path toward a cluster of lavishly appointed houses. In one of these a gentleman quietly surveys the calm expanse of water before him as he awaits the arrival of his guest. In the opposite half of the painting soft washes of gray ink portray a large mountain rising as a solid mass from the edge of the lake and the hills beyond. Directly opposite the village a lone fisherman in a boat anchored near shore casts a fishing rod. The mountain in the background and the small estuary at the left recall the famous painting *Catching a Catfish with a Gourd* by Josetsu, an early fifteenth-century priest-painter, who had been inspired by the work of the Southern Sung master Ma Yüan. The beauty of Sesson’s painting is unfortunately somewhat diminished by the condition of the silk, which has darkened with age, but the superb brushwork and tightly structured composition can still be enjoyed. The painting is essentially in ink monochrome, with tones varying from a rich, coal black to a soft pearl gray, but a spot of bright red color on the saddle of the donkey suddenly makes us aware of the verdant shades of the delicate foliage. The carefully constructed, architectonic solidity of the composition is seldom found in Sesson’s landscapes. The tightly controlled, deliberate lines and subtle changes in tonality are also rare in Sesson’s œuvre, another reflection of his efforts to emulate Southern Sung painters, particularly Ma Yüan.



*Cauldron-shaped seal of “Sesson”*

Although the painting is not signed, it bears two seals, both reading “Sesson.” The same seals are found on other works without the signature: for example, a painting of flowers and birds in the Fujii Tokuji collection. The Fujii painting, which is also on silk, is a copy of the so-called Sung Academy style of flower-and-bird pictures that features extremely delicate brushstrokes and bright colors. The absence of a signature, the type of seals used, and the style of the painting suggest that the landscape painting here is an early Sesson work, executed when he was studying the great masters of the past. According to an inscription of 1655, which is found on the old box for this painting, the scroll once belonged to a gentleman named Torii Jiun, who lived in Tanakura, a small town in the north in modern Fukushima prefecture. Nakamura Tanio speculates that after Sesson left his hometown around 1546, he traveled north along the Kuji River in order to reach Aizu Wakamatsu.<sup>6</sup> The town of Tanakura is located on the road connecting his hometown, Ōta, with his destination. It is possible that Sesson painted this landscape for a local patron during his northward journey.

1. For the pre-Meiji literary sources on Sesson, see Nakamura Tanio, *Sesson to Kantō Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 63, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo, (Tokyo, 1971), p. 19.
2. Sakazaki Shizuka, ed., *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), pp. 809–810.
3. Fukui Rikichirō, “Sesson Shōki,” *Bunka* XI/2 (November 1935), pp. 1395–1398; Tanaka Ichimatsu, “The Landscape Screen Paintings of Four Seasons by Sesson,” *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 198 (May 1958), pp. 1–10.
4. Tanaka, “Landscape Screen Paintings,” pp. 1–10.
5. Ibid.
6. Nakamura Tanio, *Sesson to Kantō*, p. 31.

## Chikurin Shichiken (The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove)

Muromachi period

Sesson (about 1504–about 1590)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

H. 102.6 x W. 51.8 cm (40<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 20<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SEALS: Cauldron-shaped seal of “Sesson” and square seal of “Shūkei”

EX COLLECTIONS: Sakata Yasorō; Fukuoka Kōtei; Count Hijikata

PUBLISHED: Nakamura Tanio, *Sesson to Kantō Suiboku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 63, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1971), fig. 59; “The Seven Wise Men of the Bamboo Grove in a Drunken Revelry,” *Kokka* 591 (February 1940), p. 40.

An old gentleman performs an impromptu dance to the tune of drums and flutes played by four of his companions. A second figure, holding a wine pot and a cup in his outstretched arms, joins the dance, unsteady on his feet. A gentleman at the right has collapsed completely with joy and laughter. The music and hilarious antics of these carefree old men draw the attention of a group of women and children. Some of the onlookers seem to regard the outrageous display ambivalently, but the atmosphere is charged with energy; even the stalks of slender bamboo seem to sway to the tune of the songs of the aging eccentrics.

Drunken revelry in a bamboo grove is one of the oldest themes in Chinese and Japanese art and literature. It was a permissible form of escape, reflecting the fusion of a Taoist-inspired practice called *ch'ing-t'an* (*seidan*, in Japanese), or “pure conversation,” with a desire for freedom from the strict Confucian codes of conduct that governed the life of the Chinese bureaucrat. *Ch'ing-t'an* developed as a popular pastime in the later years of the Han dynasty, when small coterie of intellectuals gathered to relax and engage in witty and sophisticated discussions on philosophical matters. The idea of *ch'ing-t'an* reflects a desire for a brief respite in the wilderness, where one could abandon himself to





the life of a carefree hermit, and it corresponds to the traditional Confucian aspiration to be temporarily relieved of urban life, with its mundane routines and self-conscious decorum. The idea of escape is a recurring theme in the intellectual history of China. In practice, it became formally acceptable, even admired, with accounts of the group illustrated here, who became known as the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" (Chikurin Shichiken, in Japanese). All members of the group lived after the fall of the Han dynasty. Hsi K'ang (223-262 A.D.), supposedly the initiator of the group, was a great *ch'in* player (a zitherlike instrument called a *koto* in Japanese) and a musicologist. He is remembered particularly for an essay on the art of *ch'in* playing.<sup>1</sup> The other members were: Yüan Chi (210-263), Shan T'ao (205-283), Yüan Hsien (dates unknown), Hsiang Hsiu (221-about 300), Wang Jung (235-306), and Liu Ling (221-300). Contrary to a commonly held belief, these men, with the exception of one or two, were not wealthy gentlemen of leisure, but high-rank-

ing government officials and active literati who enjoyed comfortable urban lives. Although it may be the product of much later tradition, these gentlemen are believed to have fled the capital occasionally as youths and to have made an excursion to a famous summer resort north of the capital called Chu-lin (Bamboo Grove). There, in cool seclusion, these responsible men of superior education and high position shed the trappings of their schooled conduct and immersed themselves in the pleasures of *ch'ing-t'an*. They played music and chess, they read poetry, and most of all, they drank. In a situation of material discomfort, each of the seven experienced, however briefly, the ideal life of the recluse. When their spirits were cleansed and refreshed, they returned to their life of material comforts, politics, and decorum in the capital.

The conduct of the seven inspired many imitators. Shortly after their demise, one social critic lamented that their practice had been sullied by imitators who merely engaged in bizarre and unruly behavior.





Since the idea of escape always held a special fascination for the gentlemen-officials of China, an esteem for the seven was soon memorialized in the visual arts. Exactly when this story was first depicted in painting is not known, but it was a popular subject of painting by the last half of the fourth century. A late fourth-century painter, Tai K'uei (d. 396), is reported to have illustrated the group, and Ku K'ai-chih (about 344–406) discussed in his essay on painting, the *Lun Hua*, the relative merits of the contemporary and earlier depictions of this subject.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, none of these has survived. The earliest extant illustrations of the story is a set of relief-decorated tiles recently recovered near the city of Nanking in south China which have been dated to the early Six Dynasties period.<sup>3</sup> Since treatises on paintings from the T'ang period report a number of paintings of the seven sages, the theme must have been popular at that time.

While only a few Chinese paintings of this theme are known, there are many Japanese representations. The idea of bureaucrats who let themselves go in the wilderness must have appealed to the court nobles in the Early Heian period, because paintings depicting this subject are reported as early as the late ninth century.<sup>4</sup> Since the theme also attracted devotees of Zen, more paintings are known from the Muromachi and later periods.

Chinese and Japanese paintings rarely identify individual members of the seven and their specific attributes. Occasionally Hsi K'ang is shown playing the *ch'in*, and the white-bearded figure carrying a *ch'in* on his shoulder at the rear of the group in the Burke painting may be so identified. But since the seven are more famous for their drinking prowess than for individual traits, no rules seem to dictate how they should be represented. The Chinese usually depicted the group engaged in musical activities, while the Japanese painters preferred to show them strolling quietly in a bamboo forest. Sesson's rendition, a depiction of unrestrained drunken revelry, is a departure from the pictorial norms of both China and Japan. The inclusion of spectators—women, some nursing infants, and several children—is also unusual.

The painting is in monochrome ink, except for light washes of green and buff. A dark ink wash is used for the rocks that are partially visible in the lower left corner. Stalks and leaves of bamboo are outlined carefully



in smooth, deliberate strokes, but the clothing of the figures is described in short, thick lines. These are distinctive because they frequently turn in angles and form exaggerated peaks and “nail heads.” Another peculiarity of dress is the strangely tapered, tubelike sleeves that hang below the hands of the dancing hermit. The tips of the sleeves, which are bent sharply at right angles to the rest of the garment, have a curious, animated life of their own.

The painting is not signed, but it has two seals: the cauldron-shaped one reads “Sesson”; the rectangular reads “Shūkei.” Both seals appear on the dated paintings of Sesson from his formative years in the 1550s. The absence of a signature on this painting indicates that it is from his earlier period, before Sesson made it a habit to sign his works. The unusual stylistic features of this painting may be regarded as an early indication of idiosyncrasies evident in works of his mature years.

1. R. H. van Gulik, *Hsi K'ang and His Poetical Essay on the Lute*, Monumenta Nipponica Monographs, ed. Sophia University, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 1969); D. Holzman, *La vie et la pensée de Hsi K'ang* (Leyden, 1957).
2. Alexander C. Soper, “A New Chinese Tomb Discovery: The Earliest Representation of a Famous Literary Theme,” *Artibus Asiae* XXIV/2 (1961), p. 85. Ku's *Lun Hua* is in chapter V of the *Li-tai Ming-hua Chi*, a ninth-century book on paintings and painters by Chang Yen-yüan.
3. Soper, “New Chinese Tomb”; for good photographic reproductions of these tiles, see Nagahiro Toshio, *Rikuchō Jidai Bijutsu no Kenkyū* (*The Representational Art of the Six Dynasties Period: Report of the Research Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto University*) (Tokyo, 1969).
4. Ienaga Saburō, *Jōdai Yamato-e Nempyō*, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 1966), p. 25.

## Landscape with Rocky Precipice

Muromachi period

Sesson (about 1504–about 1590)

Hanging scroll; ink and color on paper

W. 46.8 x H. 30.3 cm (18<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 11<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Kei Sesson"

SEAL: "Shūkei"

EX COLLECTION: Kumita Shōhei, Tokyo

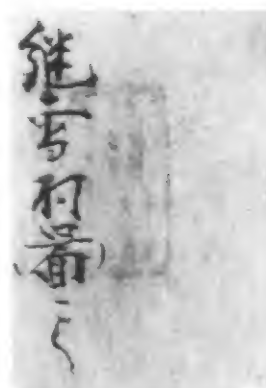
PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu and Nakamura Tanio, *Sesshū, Sesson, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikēi*, vol. VII (Tokyo, 1973), pl. 102; Nakamura Tanio, *Sesson to Kantō Suiboku-ga*, *Nihon no Bijutsu*, 63, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1971), fig. 1; Etō Shun, "Landscape by Sesson," *Kobijutsu* 25 (March 1969), pp. 69–70; Hom'ma Art Museum, ed. *Sesson no Geijutsu* (Sakata, Yamagata Prefecture, 1968), no pl. no.

In contrast to nos. 40 and 41, this landscape by Sesson, painted on paper, reflects the artist's mature style, clearly exhibiting many of the stylistic idiosyncrasies typical of his later works. A bit of land extending from the lower right corner in the foreground is connected to a cluster of steeply rising cliffs in the middle ground by a diagonally placed land bridge. At the far end of the bridge, the path abruptly shifts direction to the right, leading to a group of large buildings, perhaps country inns, which follow the ascent of the

peaks. Mountains gently touched by mist rise directly behind, then slope to the right, and a fishing village lies nestled on the shore beneath the sharp precipice. The scene is busy with figures: a traveler on a donkey enters the scene from the lower right, people cross the bridge or engage in conversation at either end.

Free and highly individualized brushstrokes help to create a strong sense of buoyancy in this landscape. Lines often turn at sharp angles, break abruptly, then start again just as abruptly. Light ink applied to the surface of the rocks and cliffs in rhythmic, repetitive diagonals enhances the massiveness and height of the bluffs in the middle ground. Heavy black lines create peculiar curves at the eroded baselines of the cliffs, a technique also used in no. 40. The slow, deliberate character of these outlines is similar to the outlining of the clothing worn by the seven sages in no. 41. At first glance the brushstrokes here seem disjointed and disorganized, but these features are even more strongly accentuated in paintings from Sesson's last period, and they give his work a bizarre, eccentric effect.

The painting is signed, suggesting that it belongs to Sesson's mature period in the 1560s and thereafter: it has only one seal, which reads "Shūkei." Sesson used the same seal on many of his mature works, but in works from his last period, when he was in his seventies and eighties, it is used in combination with other seals. The use of the single seal and the style of the painting date the work to Sesson's middle period, in his sixties.





## Pai Ya Plays the *Ch'in* as Chung Tzu-ch'i Listens

Muromachi period

Attributed to Kanō Motonobu (about 1476–1559)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

H. 165.8 x W. 87.2 cm (65<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 34<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

EX COLLECTIONS: Hara Tomitarō, Kanagawa

Prefecture; Date Munemoto, Tokyo

PUBLISHED: Takeuchi Shōji, "The Immortal One

Playing a Harp: A Painting Formerly Owned by the Date Family and Screen Paintings from the Main Hall of Daisen-in Temple," *Kobijutsu* 39 (December 1972), pls. 81, 82; "Pai Ya Playing the Koto," *Kokka* 556 (March 1937), p. 74; Tajima Shiichi, *Motonobu Gashū* (Tokyo, 1903), II, no pl. no.

A refined gentleman, dressed in a flowing scholar's robe, is seated in a small craggy nook with his *ch'in*, a zitherlike instrument, placed on a small table before him. Another scholar, seated a short distance away with a young attendant beside him, listens attentively with his head slightly bowed. The calmness and the reverent concentration of the two gentlemen contrast with the harsh mountain setting, with its crystalline rocks and the pointed branches of twisted pine trees. Although this composition is very similar to a scene of *ch'in* playing included in an illustration of the popular Chinese subject called the *Four Scholarly Accomplishments* (*ch'in*, chess, calligraphy, and painting), this painting was identified by 1893 as an episode of two scholar-companions of ancient China, Pai Ya and Chung Tzu-ch'i.<sup>1</sup> According to the *Lieh Tzu*, a book of Taoism of the third century A.D., the two were renowned for their close friendship and their fierce loyalty to one another. One day, when they were enjoying an outing at the T'ai-shan mountain in Shantung province, a sudden storm forced them to take refuge under a large rock. As they waited for the skies to clear, Pai Ya, an accomplished musician noted for his extraordinary talent on the *ch'in*, began to play for his companion.<sup>2</sup> The *Lü-shih Ch'un-ch'iu*, a history compiled by Lü Pu-wei (d. 235 B.C.), also states that the bereaved Pai broke his *ch'in* when his friend Chung died, never to play it again.<sup>3</sup>

The suggestion that this painting illustrates the two friends is attractive, since the story was enormously appealing to the Chinese. Playing the *ch'in* was considered the epitome of scholarly accomplishments and the unflagging loyalty of the two men to each other exemplified the highest standards of Confucian virtue. Not only was the story immortalized in Chinese literature, the theme was also popular as a decorative motif on bronze mirrors of the Han dynasty.

Although the painting has neither signature nor seal, it was attributed to the artist Kanō Motonobu on stylistic grounds in 1935, when it was designated an Important Art Object, an honorary classification formerly used by the Japanese government. This painting indeed bears a striking resemblance to a number of paintings that once decorated six rooms in the Hōjō, or abbot's quarters, of Daisen-in, a subtemple of Daitokuji in Kyoto.<sup>4</sup> The Daisen-in screen paintings have been remounted as hanging scrolls, and the group of them was divided between the National Museums of Kyoto and Tokyo. Thirty of these paintings, which originally decorated the walls of two western rooms and a room on the northeast, have been traditionally attributed to Motonobu.<sup>5</sup> The Burke painting and the Daisen-in screen paintings have common features, showing the artist's reliance on elements developed by Chinese painters of the Ming dynasty—clear, strong outlines, the decorative effect of surface textures, and a pronounced asymmetrical composition. Our painting shows the same skillful blending of light colors into the essentially monochromatic work as the Daisen-in screens, but it was never part of the Daisen-in group, which is preserved in its entirety. The relatively large dimensions of the Burke painting, however, and its crowded composition suggest that this painting might also have been originally a part of a set of sliding screens decorating a temple interior.

Kanō Motonobu was the son of Kanō Masanobu (1434–1530), first member of a long line of Kanō artists. Recently, Tsuji Nobuo assembled extensive documentary materials pertaining to Motonobu's life and made the first attempt to systematically study the more than one hundred paintings associated with Motonobu's name.<sup>6</sup> Tsuji's research showed that Motonobu was an ambitious and successful artist who was en-



gaged in a wide range of activities. He not only followed in his father's footsteps as the official painter for the Ashikaga shoguns, but he also secured for himself and for successive generations of Kanō artists the patronage of the ruling military class at large, court nobles, Zen monasteries, and affluent merchants who were emerging as a new class. Aggressive public relations policies were necessary to accomplish this awesome task, but it was crucial to Motonobu's success that he transformed Zen-inspired ink painting into a decorative style that readily appealed to the taste of non-religious communities. Motonobu is believed to have married a woman from the Tosa family, perhaps a daughter of the clan leader, Mitsunobu (active, 1469–1523), and this alliance is supposed to have enabled him to study the traditional *yamato-e* style and to incorporate those techniques into ink painting. Since Motonobu painted an *emaki* in the *yamato-e* manner in 1513, the claims may be valid, but no firm evidence has been discovered.

Motonobu's paintings apparently received some attention in China. In 1510 a Chinese named Cheng Tse wrote a letter to Motonobu, stating that Motonobu's paintings reminded him of works by two Chinese

painters of the Sung dynasty, Chao Ch'ang and Ma Yüan, and he expressed his desire to study with the Japanese master.<sup>7</sup> In 1541 Motonobu was commissioned to paint three pairs of gold screens and one hundred fans—export items most coveted in China—which were to be presented to the Ming emperor by a Japanese trade mission.<sup>8</sup> Motonobu's fame was well established in his own lifetime, and he was awarded the honorary priestly rank of Hōgen in his later years.

Since construction of the Hōjō at Daisen-in seems to have been completed by February 1513, its screen paintings must have been executed shortly after that date. Tsuji proposes 1520, in the artist's middle period, as the approximate year of their completion.<sup>9</sup> The painting here was probably executed in the same period, when Motonobu was actively building his position as the most innovative and respected artist of his time. The painting contains all of the basic elements of the successful formula of Kanō-school art. The subtle tranquility of earlier ink painting is here replaced by a style combining heavy ink outlines with color, in large, two-dimensional compositions. This decorative polychrome formula became the standard for future generations of Kanō artists, who enjoyed the official patronage of military governments unchallenged during the next three hundred years.



1. In the 1893 certificate of attribution that accompanies the painting.
2. The *Lieh Tzu* is traditionally attributed to a Chou-dynasty philosopher, Lieh Yu-k'ao (about 450–375 B.C.), but this attribution is now generally discounted. See A. C. Graham, trans., *The Book of Lieh-tzu* (London, 1960), pp. 109–110.
3. See the chapter on Hsiao-hsing, vol. XIV of this book.
4. Takeuchi Shōji, "The Immortal One Playing the Harp: A Painting Formerly Owned by the Date Family and Screen Paintings from the Main Hall of Daisen-in Temple," *Kobijutsu* 39 (December 1972), pp. 87–88.
5. Jan Fontein and Money Hickman, *Zen Painting and Calligraphy*, (Boston, 1970), no. 63; Tsuji Nobuo, "Study of Kanō Motonobu, Part III," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 270 (July 1970), p. 43.
6. Tsuji Nobuo, "Study of Kanō Motonobu, Part I," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 246 (May 1966), pp. 10–29; *ibid.*, "Part II," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 249 (November 1966), pp. 129–159; *ibid.*, "Part III," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 270 (July 1970), pp. 41–78; *ibid.*, "Part IV," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 271 (September 1970), pp. 85–126; *ibid.*, "Part V," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 272 (November 1972), pp. 150–167.
7. Etoh Shun, "A Letter by Teitaku Addressed to Kanō Motonobu," *Yamato Bunka* 35 (July 1961), pp. 72–74.
8. Tsuji, "Study of Kanō Motonobu, Part I," p. 23.
9. Tsuji, "Study of Kanō Motonobu, Part III," p. 44.

## PART 3      The Colors of Affluence

*Momoyama Screens,  
Rimpa, and Late Yamato-e*





THE SHORT PERIOD called Momoyama (Peach Hill) covered four decades of incessant warfare among contending feudal barons, who struggled for control of Japan after the decline of Ashikaga rule in the 1560s. The name was derived from the site, now in a southern suburb of Kyoto, where the general Toyotomi Hideyoshi's Fushimi Castle stood until 1622, when it was demolished and the grounds turned into a peach (*momo*) orchard. During the turbulent forty years of the Momoyama period, control of the government changed hands three times. The official beginning of the period is usually set in 1573, when Oda Nobunaga succeeded in wresting the reins of government from the Ashikagas. Toyotomi Hideyoshi became the ruler of the nation after Nobunaga's early death in 1582, but his power, and the Momoyama period, came to an end in 1615 when Osaka Castle, the last Toyotomi stronghold, fell to the forces of Tokugawa Ieyasu, thus instituting the Tokugawa regime which was to last two hundred and fifty years, until 1867.

Although the year 1615 is the correct dividing point between the Momoyama and Edo periods from the standpoint of political history, it is unsatisfactory for the history of art. The splendid decorative style developed in the Momoyama period survived well into the seventeenth century. At the beginning of the Tokugawa regime, leaders of the major sixteenth-century painting schools—Hasegawa Tōhaku (d. 1610), Kaihō Yūshō (d. 1614), Unkoku Tōgan (d. 1618), and Kanō Sanraku (d. 1635)—were almost all retired from the scene. But the tradition that these artists had established during their brilliant careers was continued by their able second-generation successors, while artists known under the name of Rimpa, like Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637) and Sōtatsu (d. about 1640), were just beginning their productive careers.

While the arts were stimulated by the fluctuating political atmosphere, leaders in the arts often suffered. The rise and fall of the two great tea masters, Sen no Rikyū and Furuta Oribe, echoed the fortunes of the warlords and transformed Japanese aesthetics. Sen no Rikyū, who had dominated the world of tea and matters of taste under the patronage of both Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, was ordered by Hideyoshi to commit ritual suicide (*seppuku*) in 1591. With his demise, the aesthetic ideals set forth by Yoshimasa and his coterie of taste-makers in the late Muromachi period declined. The appreciation of subdued simplicity was replaced with a preference for a freer, more open and dynamic beauty prescribed by Oribe. Oribe could not escape the vicissitudes of the time either, however; he was ordered to commit *seppuku* by Ieyasu in 1615 on suspicion of disloyalty. Oribe's death marks the end of a long tradition of official patronage of the arts and of artists by aesthetically oriented rulers. Successive generations of Tokugawa shoguns, who governed from the new town

of Edo, now Tokyo, were remarkably free from the influences of religion and the arts.

Many divergent schools of painting flourished in the Momoyama period. In spite of the uncertainty of their future destinies, or perhaps because of them, the war barons administered their wealth liberally to display their newly acquired power. Another step in the evolution of Momoyama style resulted indirectly from the unexpected arrival of the Portuguese in the mid-sixteenth century. Portuguese muskets were immediately copied by the Japanese, significantly affecting the mode of warfare and the nature of military architecture in Japan. Castles protected by moats, which were built as fortifications against these powerful firearms, also served as residences, and their large, dark interiors required a kind of decoration much more colorful and exuberant than the Chinese-type ink paintings of the Muromachi period. This was an exciting challenge to painters whose previous experience was limited to decorating the homes of court nobles or the priests' living quarters in Buddhist temples. A new art style suitable to the somber castle halls and pleasing to the self-made men of arms had been introduced by Kanō Motonubu (about 1476–1559) (no. 43) and his son Shōei (1519–1592), and it flourished at the hands of Shōei's son, Eitoku (1543–1590). One of their outstanding early efforts was the decoration for Nobunaga's seven-story castle at Azuchi, which was built in 1576 on the southwestern shore of Lake Biwa. Fortunately, before the castle was destroyed in the fighting of 1582, its appearance and its interior decoration were recorded by Ōta Ushikazu in his *Shinchō-kō Ki*.<sup>1</sup> Kanō Eitoku, his sons, and his pupils painted the walls of this castle with "heroic" motifs—large pine and cypress trees, peonies, hawks, dragons, lions, and tigers. The paintings were richly colored, the scale exaggerated, and the styles impressive, if somewhat blatant. Above all, the paintings were embellished with a great deal of gold. This ostentation, which flattered the vanity of military power, fortuitously coincided with an increased production of gold and silver.

The multistoried Azuchi Castle, standing majestically on a hilltop, was an impressive model for later castles. Other warriors quickly followed suit: Toyotomi Hideyoshi built Osaka Castle (1583–1590), the Jurakudai in Kyoto (1587), and Fushimi Castle (1594), and lesser warlords secured their provincial territories with the new structures. Unfortunately, not many of these castle fortresses survived the great battles of this tumultuous era. Only a few sections of buildings and a few screens removed from their original sites hint at their splendor.

While contenders vied for power in the political arena, schools of painters competed for important commissions. As never before in Japanese history, painters flourished, working feverishly on the decoration of sumptuous buildings. Rivalry spurred them to paint even larger forms, in more brilliant colors,

and in an increasingly decorative manner. All of the major schools painted heroic animals, flowers and birds, and the historical and mythological themes of China that exalted fidelity, as well as themes from the classical literature of Japan, especially the *Tale of Genji*. Their creative energies culminated in the dramatic reconciliation of two long-standing artistic traditions, Japan's own *yamato-e* and the ink style borrowed from China.

Only a small, loosely knit group known today as Rimpa, working in various arts including painting, calligraphy, ceramics, and lacquerware, remained outside this frenetic trend. The name Rimpa is, in fact, a misnomer for the group, since the word means the school (*pa*) of Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716), who was not the founder. He was actually only an admirer and later rejuvenator of the artistic ideals cultivated by its originators, Hon'ami Kōetsu and Sōtatsu. The Rimpa artists did not, strictly speaking, compose a school, and, although some family ties were established through marriages, membership was not determined by birthright. Their liaison was voluntary and based on common artistic aspirations. Many of them lived in widely separated times and never enjoyed direct contact with their mentors. For example, Ogata Kōrin lived from 1658 to 1716, and Sakai Hōitsu, from 1761 to 1828.

How the aesthetic precepts governing the arts of Kōetsu and Sōtatsu were formulated is not altogether clear. A small group of cultivated courtiers who were close to Emperor Gomizunō (1596–1680), including Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638) and Ichijō Kanetō (1605–1672), aspired to a renaissance of the ancient canons of art, particularly the courtly styles of the Fujiwara period. Emperor Gomizunō, who was tyrannized by the Edo Bakufu even in matters of court ceremonies, and his nephew, Prince Tomohito, are well known today for their palaces, the Katsura and Shugaku-in. These two structures and their gardens are superb examples of the early seventeenth-century palace architecture, and they are now major tourist attractions. Also drawn to the courtly circle were a few wealthy merchants, like Sumikura Soan (1571–1632) and Sano Shōeki (1610–1691), who were cultured and well educated in the taste of Kyoto's past. Together, these businessmen and courtiers were responsible for the brief but brilliant revival of Fujiwara aesthetics. Their patronage made possible ambitious publishing ventures, such as the *Saga Books* by Soan, which reprinted Japanese classics, as well as the collaboration between Kōetsu and Sōtatsu. These two artists produced a perfect union of literature, calligraphy, and painting in numerous handscrolls and album pieces (see nos. 48, 49).

Another group of painters, which was probably the largest of this period, must not be overlooked. These were the *machi-eshi* ("town painters"), anonymous artists whose products were intended to satisfy the ever-growing demands of men who were politically less influential but constituted an affluent middle class patronage which was in a position to purchase ready-made pictures. The

*machi-eshi* worked in painting shops, called *e-ya*, a designation that begins to appear in documents of this period; their work was largely based on the *yamato-e* tradition. They painted pictures without moralizing overtones, free from the demands of an egocentric clientele (see nos. 46, 47). Some of their works were simple genre, such as the Rakuchū-Rakugai screens (see no. 45), and they are responsible for recording such pleasures of Kyoto as the Gion Festival, the horse races at Kamo, the archery contest at Sanjūsangen-dō, scenes of the Kabuki theater, and the brothel district.

Finally, the Momoyama period was extraordinary for the production of tea-ceremony ceramics and lacquerwares, particularly the group of lacquers known as the Kōdaiji-type *maki-e* (see no. 103). Among tea utensils, the wares called Shino, Oribe, and Iga represent an aspect of Japanese ceramics unprecedented in the world before our own time (see nos. 97–99): although they were designed for utilitarian function, artists treated them as sculpture, showing a deep concern for the tactile quality of the vessel and for the beauty of form.

1. Kondō Keizō, ed., *Kaitei Shiseki Shūran*, XIX (Tokyo, 1906), pp. 125–127; Doi Tsuguyoshi, *Momoyama no Shōheki-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 14, ed. Kamei Katsuichirō et al. (Tokyo, 1964), pp. 82–85.

## View of the West Lake



Edo period

Kanō Sanraku (1559–1635)

Pair of six-fold screens; ink, light color, and gold  
on paper

Each screen, W. 358.2 x H. 151.6 cm (141 $\frac{1}{16}$  x 59 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: "Kanō Sanraku," "Aged seventy-two  
[1630]" on both screens

SEALS: "Shuri," "Mitsuyori" (?) on both screens

There are several lakes in China called West Lake (Hsi-hu), but the most famous is located west of Hangchow in Chekiang province, south China.<sup>1</sup> The area around this lake abounds with famous religious monuments built mostly during the reign of the king Ch'ien-shu (908–978), a devout patron of the T'ien-t'ai sect (Tendai, in Japanese). For this reason, West Lake became a favorite site of pilgrimage for Buddhist monks. Scenic spots with literary and historical associations are also plentiful here, and the lake was the chosen residence of many poets and scholars, most well known among them being Su Shih (also known as Su Tung-p'o, 1037–1101), one of the greatest Chinese poets.

Views of this lake were apparently quite popular as a subject of painting during the Southern Sung dynasty; records often refer to paintings of this lake by famous artists like Li Sung, Liu Sung-nien, Ma Lin, and Ma Yüan. Just as the most beautiful scenes at the confluence of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers in south China were grouped into the famous set of the so-called *Eight Views at the Confluence of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (no. 34), the most well known sites at West Lake were assembled to form a set of ten. This grouping of ten scenes may not go back earlier than the thirteenth century in the Southern Sung dynasty. The West Lake set painted by Ma Lin in the mid-thirteenth century is the earliest known example of West Lake clearly identified as the *Ten Views*.

Although there are some variations in the choice of individual scenes, the *Ten Views of West Lake* are usually: Autumn Moon on the P'ing-hu Lake, Spring



Dawn over Su Shih Dike, Lingering Snow on the Tuan-ch'iao Bridge, Evening Glow on the Lei-feng Pagoda, Evening Bell from the Nan-p'ing Mountain, Lotus Flowers at Ch'ü-yin, Watching Fish at Hua-chiang, Listening to Nightingales at Liu-lang, Lights from Beacons Cast Over the Water at San-t'ang, and Clouding over the Twin Peaks.

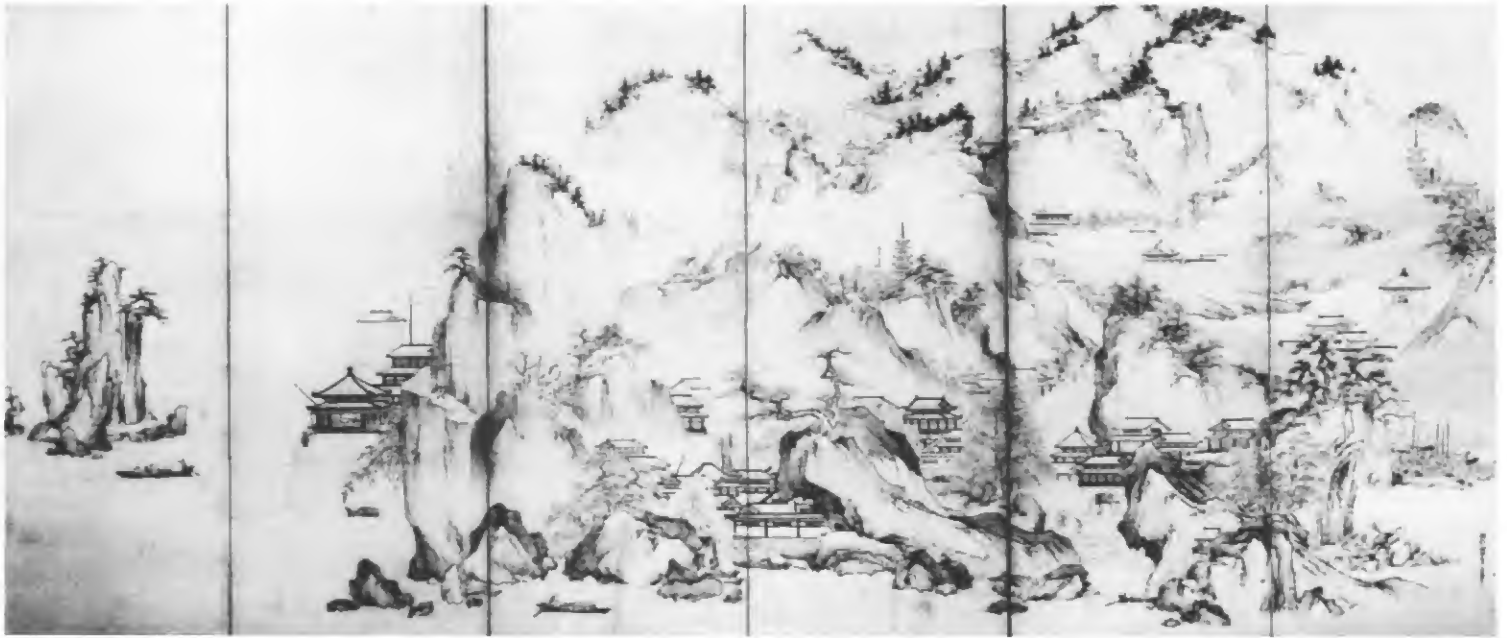
Two different iconographic types of West Lake were available: one simply represented major sites at the lake; the other depicted ten scenes as a set. The most famous Japanese painting of West Lake from the Muromachi period is a hanging scroll in the Hatakeyama Issei collection, long attributed to Sesshū (1420–1506) but now considered to be the work of his pupil Shūgetsu (late fifteenth to early sixteenth century). The painting, which seems to have been executed while the artist was traveling in the area of West Lake, includes no scene from the *Ten Views*. Many ink painters of the Muromachi period had a chance to visit the lake, but it was also painted frequently by painters who never went to China, like the Kanō artists of the Momoyama and Edo periods. Since these later Japanese artists had no chance to see the sites, their paintings must have been modeled after Chinese prototypes.

While the theme has many variations, all of the West Lake paintings include a generous number of arched

bridges, often including the dike with six arcuated bridges known to have been built by the poet Su Shih during his tenure of office in this area. Many pagodas and gently drooping willow trees are also indispensable features of these paintings. But among these numerous versions, only a few Japanese paintings of West Lake depict the *Ten Views*.

The pair of screens here is unusual in that it clearly has its iconographic source in the *Ten Views*. On the right-side screen, a powerful, crowded, close-up view of rocky hills gradually opens up toward the left. A high, distant viewpoint is adopted for the left screen, creating a strong feeling of open space over the large lake. The seasons progress from spring to winter, from right to left. At the right many trees are in foliage, and the strong, dark ink outlining rocks and hills suggests the full vegetation of summer. The left screen gives a sense of crisp and quiet autumn air: leaves have begun to fall, and a hint of snow has settled on the distant hills. Gold pigment, applied with restraint over the background, among the hills, and on the water, unites the screens by softening the effect of their compositional differences. On the right screen, in the foothills and in the folds of the peaks, are imposing temple buildings; in the foreground a few pilgrims disembark at a landing. A steep winding stone stairway disappears behind a





rocky promontory; a few men study inscriptions on the large memorial tablet set up at its side. No features are provided to identify the monuments, but the large buildings clustered at the edge of the water and the staircase may represent one of many princely mausolea that dot the lake's shores.

Many monuments suggesting the poetic imagery of the ten scenes are scattered over the left screen. At the top right corner, white lotus flowers are strewn over a calm lake that may be identified as Ch'ü-yin, the sixth scene; several passengers in a boat have paused to appreciate the effect. The straight horizontal line of Su Shih's stone dike with its series of arcuated bridges extends across the background. The curious, octagonal structure that emerges from behind the mist where the dike fades into the golden haze is the five-storied pagoda of Lei-feng, one of the best known monuments of West Lake. It was built in 975 by King Ch'ien-shu, who placed one scroll of sutra within each of the 84,000 bricks used in the pagoda's construction. The pagoda collapsed completely in 1924,<sup>2</sup> but it had deteriorated much earlier. A Chinese printed illustration of West Lake made in 1671 represents the pagoda just as it appears in Sanraku's depiction, with a thick growth of trees at its top.<sup>3</sup> In the center of the screen is another curious feature: three lanternlike objects protruding

from the water. These three beacons, commonly known as San-t'ang (scene nine), mark the deepest spots in the lake. At the bottom of the third panel from the right, is the fishery of Hua-chiang (scene seven), where fishes swim in the pond and a man reads quietly in the adjoining pavilion.

Sanraku's composition does not strictly adhere to the geographic locations and relationship of the sites and monuments, since his concern was to represent a cohesive composition. Nevertheless, the description of individual scenes and monuments closely resembles their counterparts in Chinese woodcut illustrations of the same subject.<sup>4</sup> Ming books with woodcut illustrations were then available to many Japanese artists, and these, rather than paintings, could have been Sanraku's models. In fact, around 1607, Sanraku painted scenes from the *Ti-chien T'u-shu* (*Stories of Good and Evil Emperors*). This book was edited in 1572 by Chang Cheng-chü, and an illustrated version was reissued in Japan thirty years later.

Although Sanraku painted many screens representing views of West Lake, this pair and another in a private collection in Japan, reportedly almost identical, are the only known paintings of the *Ten Views* by this artist. His signature and two seals are placed at the lower edges of both screens. Since the signatures are

accompanied by reference to his age of seventy-two, they may be dated to 1630, when Sanraku was engaged in the last major project of his career: the decoration of the rooms at Tenkyū-in, a subtemple of Myōshinji in Kyoto, with the help of his son-in-law, Sansetsu (1589–1651). Two seals impressed on each screen are the same as those found on almost all paintings attributed to Sanraku. The smaller, rectangular one reads “Shuri”; the larger one with a cauldron shape within a square is not clear, although it is usually deciphered “Mitsuyori,” apparently a youthful name of Sanraku.

Although Sanraku was not born to the Kanō family, he became the fifth leader of this powerful school when Kanō Eitoku died in 1590. For the four generations before Sanraku, leadership of the family was granted as a birthright. Succession to this august post by an outsider like Sanraku was a factor in securing the extraordinarily successful survival of this family in the Edo period and even to the present day. The Kanō family often permitted talented artists to marry into the family or to use the family name, thus revitalizing the old clan. Sanraku himself followed this practice by selecting Sansetsu as his legal heir. Most of the information on Sanraku's life is found in the *Honchō Gashi*,<sup>5</sup> a book begun, but never finished by Sansetsu, which is generally regarded as the first comprehensive history of Japanese painting. It was completed by Sansetsu's son, Einō (1634–1700), in 1676. According to this book, Sanraku's father, Kimura Nagamitsu, was a low-ranking warrior who was mildly gifted in painting and studied with Kanō Motonobu (see no. 43). His service to Toyotomi Hideyoshi is said to have opened the door for his son, whose precocious talent in painting Hideyoshi was quick to recognize. Hideyoshi is generally believed to have given Sanraku permission to

study with Eitoku and later to use the illustrious name of the Kanō family. Hideyoshi also commissioned young Sanraku to decorate his Fushimi Castle, which was unfortunately demolished in 1622. Hideyoshi's special patronage, however, worked against Sanraku after the collapse of the Toyotomi rule in 1615. In an attempt to escape persecution by the new Tokugawa government, Sanraku hid for a while at the Otokoyama Hachiman Shrine near Osaka, where the chief priest was painter-scholar Shōkadō Shōjō (1584–1639). The shogun's pardon of Sanraku shortly thereafter is reportedly the result of Shōkadō's concerned intervention.

Although Sanraku supposedly studied with Eitoku, his early works do not usually reflect the extravagant Eitoku style; they are often executed with soft, dry, hemp-fiber strokes more reminiscent of the work of Eitoku's father, Kanō Shōei (1519–1592). Sanraku's personal idiosyncrasies did not emerge until very late in his career, around 1620, when he decorated screens showing plums and peonies for the Imperial Palace, which were later given to Daikakuji, Kyoto. The strangely cubic and vertical forms of crystalline rocks and the short, sharp strokes that give structural strength to his landscape elements on the Daikakuji screens are characteristic of Sanraku's late style. These features also characterize the screens here.

1. Fu Wang-lu, ed., *Hsi-hu Chih*, 1878 ed.
2. Sekino Tadashi and Tokiwa Daijō, *Buddhist Monuments in China* (Tokyo, 1927), V, pl. 55.
3. Bijutsu Kenkyū-jo, ed., *Shina Ko-hanga Zuroku* (Tokyo, 1932), pl. 12.
4. For example, those reproduced in *ibid.* and *Hsi-hu Chih*.
5. *Honchō Gashi* (Tokyo, 1974).







## Rakuchū-Rakugai (Kyoto and its Suburbs)

Momoyama period (early seventeenth century)  
 Pair of six-fold screens; color on gilded paper  
 Each screen, W. 352.2 x H. 156.1 cm (138<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 61<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.)  
 PUBLISHED: Narazaki Muneshige, "Newly-discovered  
 Screen Paintings of Rakuchū-Rakugai," *Kokka* 868  
 (July 1964), pp. 11–17; Tani Shin'ichi, "Screen  
 Paintings of Rakuchū and Rakugai," *Nihon Rekishi*  
 191/192 (April/May 1964), no pl. no.

Paintings depicting views of Kyoto and its suburbs are known as *Rakuchū-Rakugai Zu*, *rakuchū* meaning "capital's inside," *rakugai*, "capital's outside," and *zu*, "pictures." The word "*raku*," meaning a capital, is the Japanese pronunciation of the first Chinese character in the name "Loyang," the city in northeast China that was frequently designated the capital of ancient China. Pictures of Kyoto's "inside and outside," usually executed on screens, illustrate the famous scenic spots and important monuments of the capital and its suburbs that serve as settings for seasonal festivals and entertainment. Such screens were much admired and in great demand among Kyoto citizens, as well as out-of-town visitors, who bought them as souvenirs of their trips to the capital. They were also coveted items of a bride's dowry. One of two of the earliest extant screens of this type was given to Lord Uesugi as a going-away gift on his departure from Kyoto by Oda Nobunaga while he was ruler of Japan. The screens are still in the possession of Lord Uesugi's descendants.

The origin of this popular subject can be traced to an important genre of *yamato-e*, a type of indigenous Japanese picture whose basic concept and pictorial formula were perfected in the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods.<sup>1</sup> Few examples of these early genre paintings exist, but there are many references to two important types of *yamato-e*: the *meisho-e*, paintings that depicted certain activities taking place in famous scenic spots around the country, and the *tsukinami-e*, pictures of events in different seasons of the year.<sup>2</sup> Since most of the scenic spots came to be associated with special sea-

sonal festivals, the two themes were often combined in one painting. The paintings of Rakuchū-Rakugai are the final development of the *meisho-e* and *tsukinami-e*.

Even during the Muromachi period, when the Japanese were especially influenced by Chinese culture, interest in the *meisho-e* and *tsukinami-e* survived. Especially surprising are the poems composed by Zen monks, champions of Chinese culture, in praise of paintings that depict these purely Japanese themes.<sup>3</sup> While no screen paintings of this subject from the Muromachi period have survived, the theme appears on many folding fans of the period. Fans were often made to form a large set illustrating a series of scenic views and seasonal activities. The small compositions of these fans and their delicate styles were eventually used as archetypes for the compositional units that constituted the large screens, a formula established sometime in the early sixteenth century. In 1503, Tosa Mitsunobu (d. about 1523) painted one screen showing views of only the inner capital, which was hailed as a novelty.<sup>4</sup> The Rakuchū-Rakugai type of picture seems to have been established shortly thereafter. The oldest extant screens of this type are a pair in the Machida collection, which is dated to the 1520s; the pair in the Uesugi collection is dated in the decades 1550–1570.

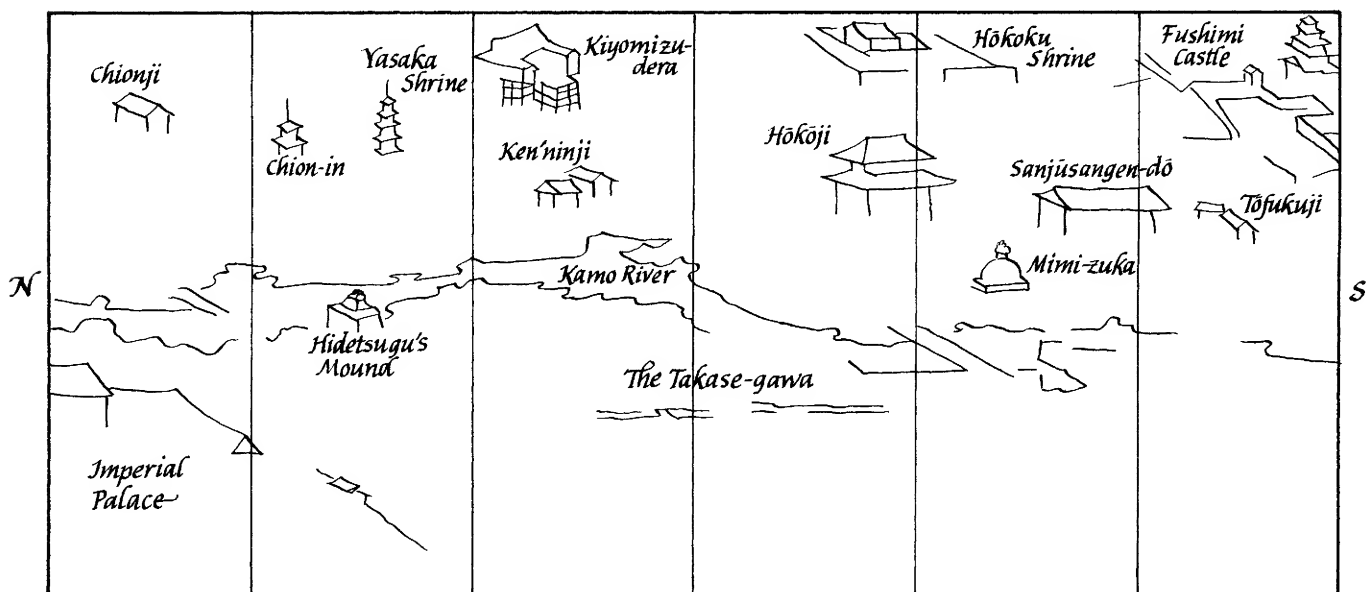
This genre became so popular and the demand for it so great that such screens must have been executed in great quantity, at least for awhile. The subject was not a monopoly of one particular school. The pair in the Uesugi collection is said to have been painted by Kanō Eitoku (1543–1590), and Tosa artists undoubtedly followed the example set in 1503 by their ancestor Mitsunobu. Most of these screens were produced by anonymous artists whom Japanese scholars often group together under the name *machi-eshi* ("town painter"). Regardless of their training or affiliation, the artists who painted such "Kyoto screens" usually had a keen sense of history: they recorded buildings, monuments, customs—and changes in them—with archaeological accuracy. Such details are often useful guidelines for dating the screens, and they also aid the study of the physical and cultural aspects of the ancient capital. The



decline in popularity of the Rakuchū-Rakugai screen paintings in the late seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century coincided with Kyoto's loss of prestige as the center of the nation's culture, political life, and commerce.

The sixteenth-century screens in the Machida and Uesugi collections represent the first stage of the development of the Rakuchū-Rakugai genre: in them, the

city of Kyoto is divided into two sections—the left-side screen shows views of the uptown district; the right one, the downtown section. The second stage may be seen in the pair of screens here and in many others like it. The city is separated into eastern and western halves, with Abura-kōji Street (running north and south, east of Nijō Castle) as the dividing line. On the right, or eastern screen, the eastern hills (Higashi-



yama) are shown, and the Gion Festival dominates the activities. On the left screen are Nijō Castle and the western half of the city, with the northern hills (Kitayama) and the western hills (Nishi-yama) in the background.

To create the impression of a panorama when the screens are unfolded for view, they are placed facing each other, flanking the viewer, rather than side by side. South is then at the right side of the right screen, and north is at its left, carrying over to the right of the left screen and continuing to south at the left end of the left screen. Scenes of the four seasons are frequently included. In ordinary screen paintings with landscape scenes, winter is usually represented in the extreme left panels of the left screen. In the Rakuchū-Rakugai-type screens like those here, however, winter often appears at the top right-hand corner of the left screen. Since this portion of the composition represents

the northern hills, it is an appropriate place for winter scenery.

This pair of screens is unusually well-preserved, with sparkling gold set against brilliant green hills and mountains. Houses, temples, shrines, palaces, streets, and human figures emerge from beneath golden clouds. City streets and houses are laid out in an orderly, well-organized scheme. Running horizontally, almost across the center of the right screen, is the broad Kamo River, which divides the city into the metropolitan and suburban districts. In the foreground to the west of this river and nearly parallel to it, runs a narrow canal, Takasegawa, which was constructed in 1611. The monuments of major importance and famous scenic sites are identified by small labels. The imposing structure of Hideyoshi's Fushimi Castle, demolished in 1622, is seen at the top right-hand corner. Tōfukuji is near the southern boundary (our right); the Imperial Palace, at the

*Gion Festival procession. Detail from right screen*

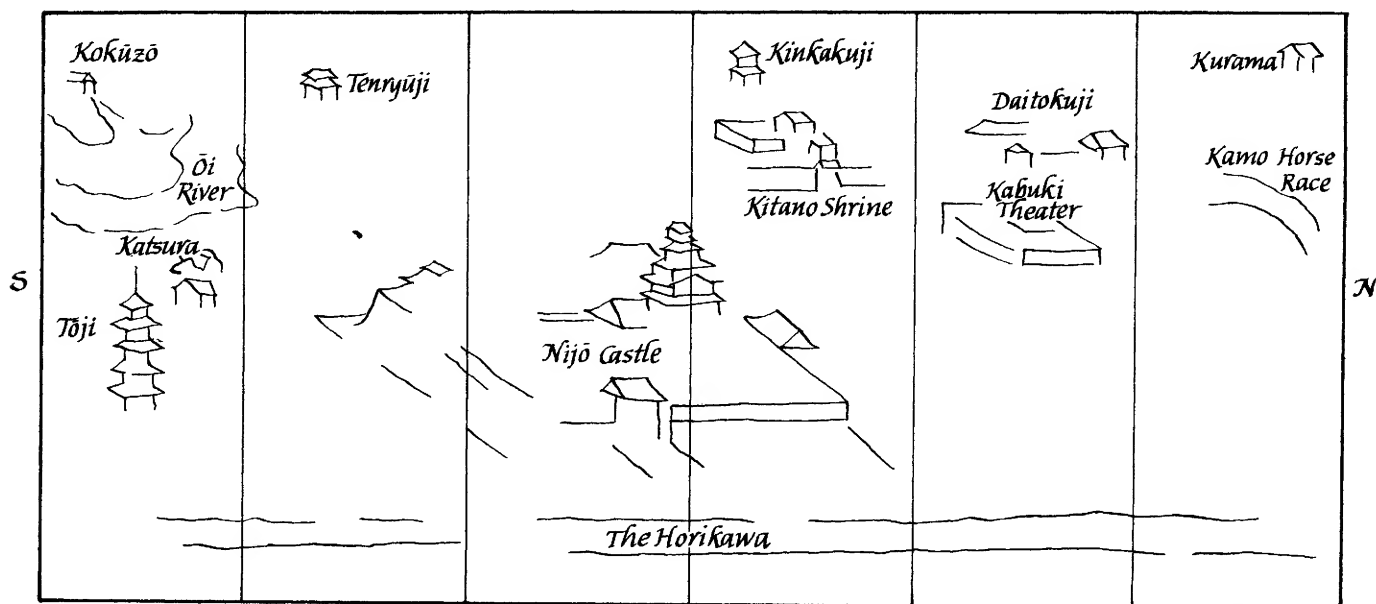




northern end (our left). The downtown section of the capital hums with activity: the time is mid-July, when the Gion Festival, the most important summer event in Kyoto, is in progress. This festival, a major tourist attraction even today, originated in the mid-ninth century and has been observed annually since 970. In this representation shopkeepers and pedestrians alike have deserted their shops and homes to watch the proces-

sion, with its colorful floats and theatrical performances, meandering through the streets and avenues.

Among the better-known Buddhist monuments in the suburbs on the eastern hills are three temples: from the south (right), Tōfukuji, Sanjūsangen-dō, and the Great Buddha Hall of Hōkōji, dedicated by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1591. In front of this last temple is an unusual monument, also connected with Hideyoshi: the





earth mound surmounted by a stone stupa is identified by its label as the Mimi-zuka (Ear Burial Mound), supposedly built to inter ears and noses of enemy soldiers brought back by Hideyoshi's expeditionary forces to Korea. Another burial monument connected with Hideyoshi, a stepped pyramid, is seen to our left at the western (near) bank of the Kamo River. It was built to inter some thirty concubines kept by the amorous Hidetsugu, adopted son of Hideyoshi. To pay for his life of dissipation, Hidetsugu was ordered by his stepfather to commit suicide in 1595, and the members of his household followed suit.

Moving slightly upward from the Great Buddha Hall, we come to another Toyotomi family monument, the Hōkoku Shrine, built as a mausoleum for Hideyoshi

in 1599, a year after his death. To the north of this shrine are Kiyomizu-dera, easily identified by its high stilts, the Yasaka Shrine with its beautiful pagoda, and the temple Chion-in. Throughout the eastern hills, pinkish white cherry blossoms dot valleys and rises. Spring is depicted in the suburbs of Kyoto, while in the city proper a summer festival is in progress. As many as three theaters are depicted on this pair of screens. In the secluded quarters of the Imperial Palace at the lower left corner of this screen is a special Noh stage, where dignified ladies and gentlemen of the court watch a performance.

The left screen echoes the basic compositional scheme of the right screen. At the lower edge runs the Horikawa, the river that separates Nijō Castle from the

*A Tokugawa family member visits Nijō Castle. Detail from left screen*



eastern half of the city. Nijō Castle, the most important monument in this composition, was completed in 1603 as the shogun Ieyasu's temporary residence in Kyoto. The street in front of the castle is the site of unusual security measures: roadblocks made of cloth curtains set up at intervals around the moat. A carriage has just emerged from the main gate of the castle and moves toward the north. A small label pasted above the carriage identifies the procession as the visit of a Tokugawa to the Imperial Palace. Members of the Tokugawa family made occasional visits to the imperial court, but it is not certain which particular occasion is illustrated in this scene. This somber procession is in fact the most prominent activity represented on the left screen. Its mood and the direction of its movement balance the feverish mood of the Gion Festival procession on the right. The castle is depicted here as it was prior to an extensive renovation of 1626, when the *tenshu-kaku* ("keep") was moved westward (to the back) and was slightly separated from the main cluster of palace buildings. A good example of the post-1626 representation of this castle is found on a screen owned by the Brooklyn Museum.<sup>5</sup>

In the suburbs, starting from south (to our left) and moving northward, we come to the tall, slender, five-storied pagoda of Tōji, which sets the southern boundary in this section of the town. Immediately above is a group of farmhouselike structures with thatched roofs. These simple houses may reflect the condition of the famous detached palace of Katsura before it was rebuilt during the Gen'na era (1615–1624) as the elegant estate that still stands today. Across the Ōi River, in the mountainous area, is Kokūzō. At the foot of a steep approach to this temple is an unusual scene representing an illustrated lecture delivered by an itinerant narrator called an *e-toki*. A small audience is beginning to form around the *e-toki*, who has set up a large hanging scroll illustrating a Buddhist story. Other famous monuments in the western hills are: Tenryūji, Kin-kakuji, and Daitokuji. A major attraction in the western suburbs is a large Kabuki theater adjacent to the Kitano

Shrine. A crowd has gathered in front of the modest theater. Within the walled enclosure of this theater a Kabuki play is being performed with an actress and a small orchestra behind her. The cartouche identifies it as the "Kuni Kabuki," the well-known Okuni Kabuki, forerunner of modern Kabuki, which made its appearance near the Kitano Shrine in or before 1603. Throughout the western and northern hills, blazing red maple leaves signal the autumn season. Incongruously, however, the famous horse race at the Kamikamo Shrine is shown at the extreme right of the first panel (north). This festival was introduced in 678, and it is customarily held in May.

The presence of both the Takase-gawa canal and Fushimi Castle allow us to date the screens to between 1611 and 1622. The pair was probably painted in a shop that produced similar pictures in large numbers for sale to affluent tourists. A few landscape details suggest that the artist might have been trained in the Kanō school. Prominent "wrinkles" (*shun*) are used to delineate the surface texture of the rocks and strong ink outlines turn at sharp angles to give the rocks an impression of ruggedness.

1. An excellent survey of the evolution of this theme is in Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Rakuchū-Rakugai Zu* (Tokyo, 1966).
2. Akiyama Terukazu, *Heian Jidai Sezoku-ga no Kenkyū* (*Secular Paintings in Early Mediaeval Japan*) (Tokyo, 1964); Alexander C. Soper, "The Rise of Yamato-e," *Art Bulletin* 24 (1942), pp. 351–379; Kenji Toda, "Japanese Screen Paintings of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries," *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959), pp. 153–166.
3. See for example, *Kanrin Gohō Shū*, III, a collection of poems and essays by Ōsen Keisan (1429–1493), in Bussho Kankō-kai, ed., *Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho* (Tokyo, 1916), pp. 1024–1039.
4. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Sanetaka-kō Ki*, IV, pt. 2 (Tokyo, 1971), p. 675, in the entry for the twelfth month, twenty-second day, of the third year of the Eishō era (1506).
5. Miyeko Murase, *Byōbu: Japanese Screens from New York Collections* (New York, 1971), p. 117.

## Uji Bridge

Momoyama period

Pair of six-fold screens; color and gold on paper  
Each screen, W. 345.3 x H. 170.1 cm (136 x 67 in.)

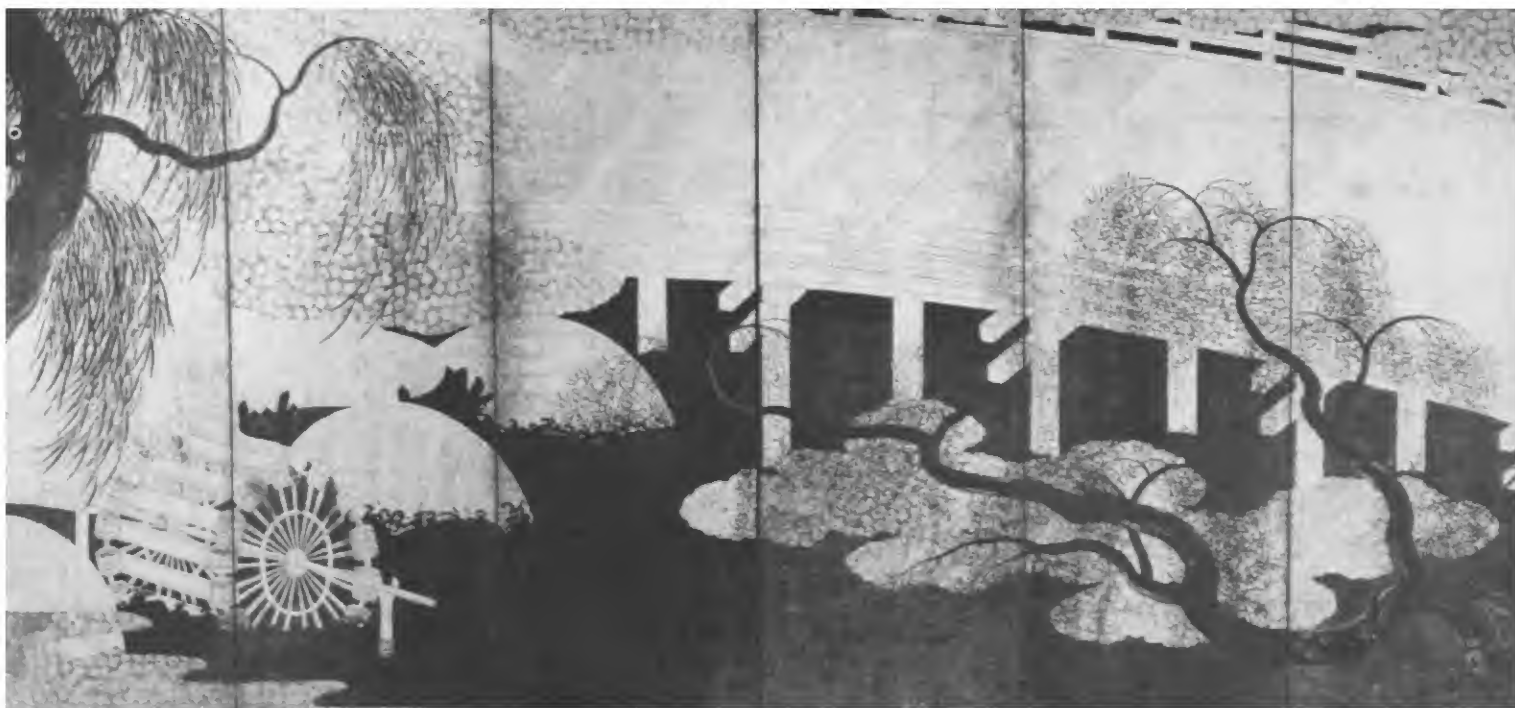
EX COLLECTION: Marquis Maeda, Tokyo

PUBLISHED: Miyeko Murase, *Byōbu: Japanese Screens*  
from *New York Collections* (New York, 1971),  
no. 18

These paintings represent the bridge over the Uji River in southeast Kyoto, a scenic view of Japan that was immortalized by many artists and poets. The Uji River, known in ancient times for good fishing as well as for turbulent currents, originates in Lake Biwa, runs southward across the southern outskirts of Kyoto, and eventually empties into Osaka Bay. A broad bridge over this river was said to have been constructed in 646.<sup>1</sup> The unforgettable beauty of the Uji area—rolling hills, clear water, and the splendid bridge—became one of

the most endeared scenic spots (*meisho*) of ancient Japan. The *Man'yō Shū* of the late eighth century, the oldest poetic anthology of Japan, includes a number of poems celebrating the beauty of this place.<sup>2</sup> Around 1010, Lady Murasaki, in her celebrated novel, *Genji Monogatari*, described Uji, extolling nearly all of the components of scenes of the Uji Bridge represented in Momoyama screen paintings.<sup>3</sup> About a half-century later, the beauty of Uji was further enhanced by another elegant architectural monument, the Byōdō-in, which was originally a summer estate of the leading Fujiwara nobleman, Yorimichi, who converted it into a Buddhist temple dedicated to Amida Buddha in 1052.

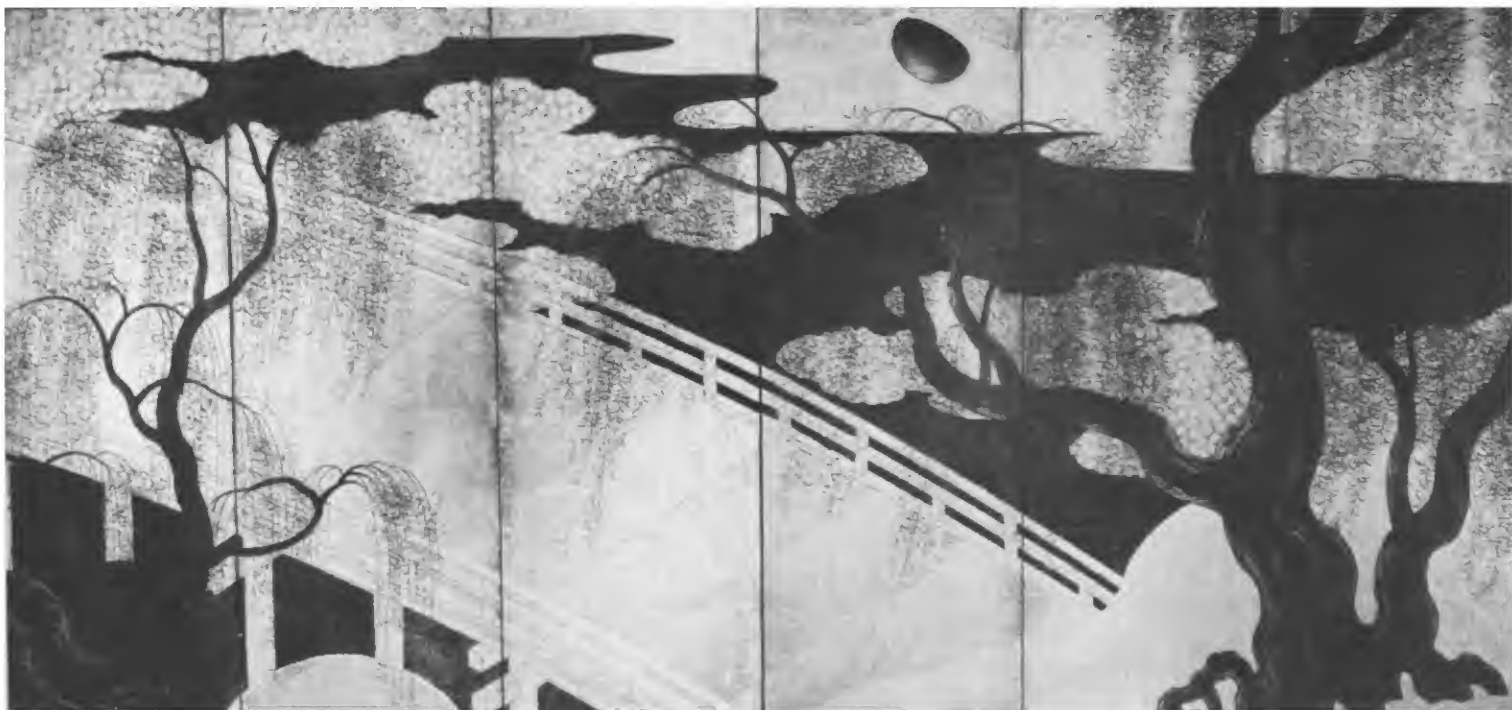
Uji holds a unique honor among the scenic spots of Japan, since it was represented in paintings as early as the Early Heian period, when Japanese painting was still completely dominated by the *kara-e*, paintings whose style and subject were totally dependent on Chinese prototypes. A screen painting depicting Uji River in the autumn, with crimson maple leaves caught by fishing baskets in the water, is reported to have been



installed at the beginning of the ninth century in the Seiryō-den, the living quarters of the Imperial Palace.<sup>4</sup> This painting of Uji was shown on one side of the screen, which had a painted scene on the verso based on the *Shan-hai Chin*, the ancient Chinese book of geography. The verso, a *kara-e*, was then known as the *Araumi no Sōji*, the screen of the rough sea. It illustrated long-limbed, fantastic creatures from imaginary lands.<sup>5</sup> The site of Uji in painting was considered representative of Japanese scenery, and together with the *Araumi no Sōji*, it became the necessary item of interior decoration of the Seiryō-den. In view of the early date of this screen painting in the Imperial Palace, it is often cited as one of the first signs that Japanese taste had encroached upon the Chinese taste of the *kara-e* tradition in Japanese painting.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the tenth century, the beautiful scenery of Uji, usually with autumnal imagery, was represented on screens, the existence of which is now known only through poems inspired by them.<sup>7</sup> Such screen paintings of Uji contained both prerequisites of *yamato-e*: the beauty of a

famous scenic spot and the imagery of changing seasons.

Unfortunately, none of these early paintings of Uji has survived; in the earliest example, an *emaki* dating from the fourteenth century, the area of Uji is a setting for the Buddhist tale, the *Ishiyama-dera Engi*. Screen paintings represented in *emaki* illustration provide almost the sole testimony to the continuing survival of *yamato-e* screens in the Muromachi period. Even during this period of intense Chinese influence, the homes of wealthy commoners, and sometimes even the living quarters of Buddhist priests, seem to have been decorated with *yamato-e* screens. The Uji theme survived through this period; beginning with the late fifteenth century, paintings of this theme reveal successive stages of development. A small fan painting in the Sasama collection in Tokyo, dated to the late fifteenth century, accurately illustrates Uji and its environs—river, bridge, the Byōdō-in, and surrounding hills—and originally formed part of a large cycle of pictures depicting scenic spots (*meisho-e*).



The Uji theme seems to have undergone another stage before its final development into a magnificent, decorative composition. This intermediary stage is well illustrated by a pair of screens in a private collection in Japan<sup>8</sup> and another in the Tokyo National Museum.<sup>9</sup> In both, the small Uji Bridge is shown only on the right-hand screen, and the composition is dominated by seasonal changes. This is particularly true of the Tokyo National Museum screens, in which the seasonal change is emphasized by the presence of the sun and moon: the sun alludes to spring and summer, and the moon relates to autumn and winter.

In the final stage, the boldest statement of the Uji theme is expressed, as on the pair here, in a composition of the utmost simplicity, consisting of the bridge, willow trees, an irrigation wheel, the crescent moon, and stone-filled baskets forming the embankments. The two screens are conceived as one compositional unit. The sun has been eliminated, and only a crescent moon, made of copper and attached to the screen by small pegs, remains in the sky. Under this moon, an enormously magnified bridge sweeps upward in a strong diagonal from the lower right corner of the right screen to the left screen, where it spans the upper half of the composition in a bold horizontal pattern. When the two screens stand slightly separated and are arranged in accordion folds, they lead the eye in a zigzag movement, giving the illusion that the bridge is even longer than it actually is. Seasonal references in addition to the moon are limited to three willow trees, placed strategically at the right, middle, and left sides, which hint at the changing seasons. Small, delicate leaves on the tree at the right and center symbolize spring, while the fuller, longer leaves at the left suggest summer growth. Tiny square pieces of gold are pasted on larger areas of gold to form irregularly shaped clouds. The water is much darker now than it was originally, because the silver used on the waves has tarnished.

With their dramatic contrasts of large forms and brilliant, shimmering tones of gold, these screens typify the pinnacle of the Momoyama decorative style. They

have lost all former association with the actual place, and stand as a dramatic interpretation of the bridge. The composition was extremely popular, repeated many times from the late sixteenth century to the early Edo period. At least eight more versions of this theme are known in American collections, and numerous others are in Japanese collections. Most are identical, except for minor variations in detail and quality. At least two versions are said to have the seals of Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610),<sup>10</sup> noted painter of the Momoyama period; another has the seal of Hasegawa Sōya, reputedly Tōhaku's son.<sup>11</sup> In some versions the willow trees have the same long, slender leaves swaying gently in the breeze as those here. This was a favorite motif among artists of the school, and it may yet be proven that a Hasegawa artist composed this pair.

1. See the *Teiō Hen'nen Ki*, in Kuroita Katsumi, ed., *Shintei Zōho Kokushi Taikō*, XII (Tokyo, 1932), p. 129, in the entry for the second year of the reign of the emperor Kōtoku.
2. This is based on research by Mae Yong v. d. Laden, "A Study on the Development of the Uji Bridge" (term paper, Columbia University, 1971); see also Jan L. Pierson, trans., *The Manyōshū* (Leiden, 1964), VII, pp. 72–77.
3. V. d. Laden, "Development of the Uji Bridge"; see also Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York, 1960), chs. 45–49, 51.
4. Ienaga Saburō, *Jōdai Yamato-e Zenshi*, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 1966), p. 29.
5. For an English translation of this passage, see Ivan Morris, trans., *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon* (New York, 1967), p. 15.
6. Ienaga, *Yamato-e Zenshi*, p. 73.
7. Ienaga Saburō, *Jōdai Yamato-e Nempyō*, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 1966), poems nos. 382, 1219, 1295.
8. Narazaki Muneshige, "Screens of the Uji River," *Kobijutsu* 6 (October 1964), pp. 97–98; Mizuo Hiroshi, "The Uji River Screens," *Kokka* 873 (December 1964), pp. 23–31.
9. Minamoto Toyomune, *Momoyama Byōbu Taiken* (Kyoto, 1931), pls. 43, 44.
10. Mizuo, "Uji River Screens," p. 31.
11. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), II (text), p. 17.

## Tagasode (Whose Sleeves?)

Edo period (early seventeenth century)

Six-fold screen; color on gilded paper

W. 380.8 x H. 170.7 cm (149<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 67<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.)

PUBLISHED: Miyeko Murase, *Byōbu: Japanese Screens from New York Collections* (New York, 1971), no. 19; Takeda Tsuneo, *Kinsei Shoki Fūzoku-ga*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 20, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1967), pl. 13.

Two clothes racks laden with beautifully designed kimono span this screen: one in full view, the other only in part. On the foreground rack, a tube containing an amulet hangs on a silken cord. At the foot of this rack is a zitherlike instrument called a *koto*. Both the furniture and the musical instrument are decorated with exquisite patterns in gold; the rack in the background bears various family emblems, one of which, a nine-star type, is similar to that depicted on the lacquered stand, no. 103. Many of the kimono have small

tie-dyed designs, which may have been stenciled, as they are uniform in size and regular in arrangement. Extensive use of this technique, including one kimono entirely decorated in tiny tie-dyed designs, reflects the textile fashion of the early seventeenth century. The screen originally formed the right half of a pair, but it is now separated from its companion piece, whose whereabouts are unknown. The left screen probably depicted more clothes, some hanging on racks, others folded on the floor.

The title of the painting, and of many others like it, is “Tagasode,” meaning “whose sleeves?” The word “*tagasode*” was used often in Japanese poems, particularly in the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods, as the “pillow-word”—the word leading into a poem.<sup>1</sup> “Tagasode” often implies a beautiful woman whose absence is missed, since beautiful sleeves are thought to evoke the image of a beautiful woman and the fragrance arising from her kimono. Such poems were probably illustrated in paintings; if so, it is most unlikely that the woman or her kimono would be shown. If typical of the Fujiwara court taste, these paintings would have





included more subtle and elusive motifs. Although examples of such paintings from the Fujiwara or Kamakura periods are not known, some late fifteenth-century lacquerwares from the Muromachi period provide a hint of their contents. In their revivalistic mood, lacquer-makers of this period were often inspired by classical literature. “Tagasode” was a favorite subject of these artists, who depicted plum flowers and incense burners that suggest fragrant scents and who cleverly incorporated the characters “Tagasode” in their pictorial designs.<sup>2</sup>

Screen paintings of “Tagasode” from the Momoyama and Edo periods usually include a perfume bag, women’s toys, amulets, musical instruments, or letter boxes—all associated with the woman who wore the kimono. While these paintings may be interpretations of the Fujiwara literary theme, it was also an ancient practice to drape beautiful kimono over clothes racks and to use them as temporary interior partitions, as folding screens and curtains were used. At picnics, colorful kimono were draped over ropes to create a temporary enclosure. In addition to its practical function, the hanging of kimono was also an opportunity for ostentatious display of proud possessions, almost like a fashion show.

“Tagasode” screen painting became popular in the late sixteenth century, contemporary with genre paintings that portrayed women, mostly from the pleasure quarters, dressed in brilliantly colorful costumes. Their dresses with striking patterns and colors often create dramatic, abstract designs imbued with a life of their own.

As the emphasis on costume increased, the figure of

the woman became less important and was finally eliminated altogether, only mysteriously suggested by her empty garments. The Momoyama rendition of this theme is a continuation of Fujiwara courtly taste, yet with new energy and a sense of drama, which appealed to the less-refined audience of the period. The subject enjoyed immense popularity during the late Momoyama and early Edo periods, when artists of various schools produced many paintings to satisfy the great demand for them. Some of these screens are attributed to Sōtatsu and his atelier.<sup>3</sup> Kaihō Yūshō and his associates, widely known for their Chinese-inspired ink paintings, are also said to have painted this theme.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps because the subject was too subtle for the taste of the Edo audience and its literary allusions were not always understood, its popularity began to wane after the middle of the seventeenth century. It was then replaced by hanging scrolls or Ukiyo-e prints showing a woman standing alone. Both types were much less costly than screen paintings, and more importantly, they appealed more directly to less-sophisticated patrons.

1. Many poems with references to “Tagasode” are found in such anthologies as the *Kokin Waka Shū*, the *Shin Kokin Waka Shū*, and the *Shūi Waka Shū*; also see Nakamura Tanio, “A Folding Screen Picture of Tagasode,” *Kokka* 804 (March 1959), pp. 89–90.
2. For example, an ink-stone box in the Yasuda Yukihiro collection in Japan: Okada Jō, “An Ink-stone Box,” *Kokka* 663 (June 1947), pl. 5.
3. Shūjirō Shimada, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), II, pl. 49.
4. Nakamura, “Folding Screen Picture of Tagasode.”

Two Poems from the *Kokin Waka Shū*  
(*The Collection of Ancient and  
Modern Poems*)

Momoyama period

Calligraphy by Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637); designs  
by Sōtatsu (d. about 1640)

Originally two album leaves, now remounted as two  
hanging scrolls; gold on colored paper

Each leaf, H. 18.3 x W. 16.3 cm (7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 6<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

Hon'ami Kōetsu was an extraordinary man who is remembered for his aesthetic vision and his many talents: painting, calligraphy, lacquer and metal design, tea ceremony, and pottery. In spite of his fame, Kōetsu's contributions to the arts and his artistic role still remain difficult to assess. Kōetsu and his family background are discussed in a biography, the *Hon'ami Gyōjō Ki*,<sup>1</sup> started by his adopted son, Kōsa (d. 1637), and completed by his grandson, Kōho (1601–1682). A more objective account is contained in the *Nigirwai Gusa* of 1682,<sup>2</sup> a collection of essays by the noted tea master Sano Shōeki (also known as Haiya Shōeki, 1610–1691). Recent research has also uncovered about 160 of Kōetsu's personal letters to his friends.<sup>3</sup> While this correspondence provides insight to his daily affairs, however, it seldom mentions his artistic activities, except for frequent references to the tea ceremony and an occasional mention of pottery.

Kōetsu was born to a family that cleaned, polished, and appraised swords. His ancestors were probably a group of craftsmen, who, in the fourteenth century, were followers of the Jishū sect and adopted “ami” as part of their surnames. Through marriage, these craftsmen established themselves with the respectable warrior class, acquiring a privileged status, which they retained to Kōetsu's day. Their important clients included the generalissimos Oda Nobunaga and Tokugawa Ieyasu, as well as members of the court.

Kōetsu apparently enjoyed the leisure life of a cultivated heir of a wealthy family. The tea ceremony was

his principal concern, and he was regarded as one of the greatest disciples of Furuta Oribe (1543–1615) (see no. 99). Kōetsu is believed to have studied calligraphy with Prince Shōren-in Sonchō (1536–1597), whose style was popular when Kōetsu was a young man, and specimens of Kōetsu's calligraphy date from about 1596. Like many calligraphers of his age, Kōetsu was influenced by the classical aesthetics of the Fujiwara period. Kōetsu's sympathy toward the court and his esteem for the cultural heritage it represented may have played some part in his move to Takagamine village, northwest of Kyoto. In 1615 when Osaka Castle, the last stronghold of the Toyotomi regime, fell under the siege of the Tokugawa forces, Tokugawa Ieyasu became the undisputed military leader of Japan. In that same year, Ieyasu ordered Furuta Oribe to commit ritual suicide (*seppuku*), because there was some suspicion about Oribe's loyalty. At the same time he granted Kōetsu a piece of land at Takagamine. It has been speculated that what appears to have been an act of generosity may, in fact, have been an exile. An old contention that Kōetsu moved to Takagamine in order to establish an art colony is somewhat discredited today, since his activities soon after his move indicate that he had a strong commitment to Buddhism. Although a number of Kyoto craftsmen joined Kōetsu in the move, it appears that the nucleus of this group was organized for religious, not artistic, purposes.

Kōetsu's predilection toward the classical tradition may have been the result of his family's association with court nobles and other supporters of the classical revival. One of Kōetsu's associates, Sumikura Soan (1571–1632), who was one of the three wealthiest businessmen in the capital, was also a great scholar of classical literature and an importer of books and medicine from China. From about 1606, Soan initiated an ambitious project with Kōetsu, publishing favorite pieces of Japanese classical literature, including the *Tale of Genji*, *Tales of Ise*, and Noh play librettos. Kōetsu designed models for the text in *kana* script, and these were reproduced for printing in movable type, a technique introduced from Korea only a few years earlier. The books came to be known as the *Saga-bon* (*Saga*



*Books*) after the suburb of Kyoto where they were published.

Although Kōetsu is believed to have worked with the painter and designer Sōtatsu in 1602 to repair a famous twelfth-century sutra, the *Heike Nōkyō*, at the Itsukushima Shrine, the *Saga-bon* project marks the first real collaboration between Kōetsu as the calligrapher and Sōtatsu as the decorator of the papers. Sōtatsu is believed to have decorated papers for many of the *Saga Books*, as well as for Kōetsu's most well known works in calligraphy, including the famous poem scrolls, like the *Deer Scroll*, now divided between the Seattle Art Museum and the Atami Museum, near Tokyo. The attribution of the paper decoration to Sōtatsu is based largely on their stylistic resemblance to paintings known to have been executed by him, but also partly on the assumption that Kōetsu was never a serious painter. He once modestly described himself as a "mediocre painter,"<sup>4</sup> and no evidence has been un-

covered to prove otherwise, although a century later Ike Taiga (nos. 68–72) stated in a colophon on his screen that he modeled it after Kōetsu's work.<sup>5</sup>

Sōtatsu's marriage to a cousin of Kōetsu, the only documented connection between the artists, seems to explain how they came to work together.<sup>6</sup> The earliest dated calligraphy by Kōetsu with Sōtatsu's decorations is a group of beautiful album leaves (*shikishi*), inscribed with a date in the eleventh year of the Keichō era, or 1606. Since the poems written on these *shikishi* were taken from treasured anthologies of ancient Japanese *waka*, the thirty-one syllable poem, these album pieces bring together three arts in works of exquisite harmony. The two artists created many beautiful works of art together, but Sōtatsu was not among the craftsmen who moved to Takagamine with Kōetsu in 1615: his name does not appear on the map showing the houses of new residents in the village.<sup>7</sup> The collaboration gradually came to a close around 1620, perhaps because Sōtatsu was beginning to pursue an independent course.

The poems that Kōetsu copied were primarily from literary classics compiled in the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods, like the *Senzai Waka Shū* of 1183 and the *Shin Kokin Waka Shū* of 1205. Kōetsu's soft, fluid style for the *kana* script and his exclusive use of decorated paper for writing *waka* emulate the twelfth-century courtly manner. On the pair of small album pieces here, Kōetsu wrote poems from the *Kokin Waka Shū* (*The Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems*), compiled in 905.<sup>8</sup> This anthology of one thousand eleven poems was compiled at the command of the emperor Daigo (r. 898–930), and it was edited by four leading poets of that period: Ki no Tsurayuki, Ki no Tomonori, Mibu no Tadamine, and Oshikōchi no Mitsune. The poems reflect the intensive efforts made by Japanese to find a congenial mode of expression in the short *waka*. Until the ninth century, literary forms had relied totally on Chinese prototypes. The poems in this anthology, remarkable for their easy-flowing style and immediacy of expression, served as models for Japanese poetry as late as the eighteenth century.

The ivy-decorated *shikishi* includes a verse by an anonymous poet:

The autumn moon shines brightly over the  
mountains.

Is it because she wants us  
to count the falling crimson leaves?

(Poem 289)

Its companion piece, boldly decorated in gold and showing a full moon, includes a poem by the priest Sosei (late ninth to early tenth century), who was one of the Thirty-six Immortal Poets. It reads:

In the riverport, where leaves descend adrift,  
The waves must break in crimson.

(Poem 293)

Some album leaves, such as those in the Staatliche Museum, Berlin, suggest that they were originally made in a set of thirty-six, and were pasted on a pair of six-paneled folding screens, three *shikishi* to a panel.<sup>9</sup> It is not known if the pieces here were arranged in the same manner. Surprisingly, they show the poem about the autumn moon written over a design of ivy leaves, while the poem about maple leaves is inscribed over a painting of a full moon. In writing poems on a scroll or album leaves, Kōetsu seldom concerned himself with the relationship between the poetic content and the pictorial designs. His writing simply followed the sequence of poems as they appeared in anthologies.

Sōtatsu often depicted a small segment of nature viewed at close range to create large, bold designs within a limited space, as he did in the ivy-patterned *shikishi*. Heavy applications of gold in large areas, which are occasionally smudged, may have suggested to him the kind of experiment that led to his development of the dramatic *tarashikomi* technique, in which the darker colors were applied over a lighter, wet pigment. Kōetsu's easy flow of the brush produces lines that are sometimes delicate, sometimes bold, but always soft, full, and sensuous. A rhythmic contrast of thick and thin strokes is especially characteristic of his album-leaf calligraphy. These leaves, for example, are similar to those dated to 1606 and to those belonging to the Staatliche Museum. They can be dated to about the same time as the *shikishi* of 1606, or around 1610.



1. Masaki Tokuzō, *Hon'ami Gyōjō Ki to Kōetsu* (Tokyo, 1965).
2. Nakatsuka Ejirō, ed., *Nihon Zuibitsu Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1929), XVIII, pp. 89–189.
3. Hayashiya Tatsusaburō et al., *Kōetsu* (Tokyo, 1964).
4. Masaki, *Hon'ami Gyōjō Ki*, pp. 70–71.
5. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakuhin Shū (The Works of Ikeno Taiga)* (Tokyo, 1957–1959), no. 487.2. This copy by Taiga bears an uncanny resemblance to a pair of screens in the Metropolitan Museum, which has been traditionally attributed to Kōetsu. See Miyeko Murase, *Byōbu: Japanese Screens from New York Collections* (New York, 1971), no. 5.
6. For genealogical chart, see Robert T. Paine and Alexander C. Soper, *Art and Architecture of Japan*, rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1975), p. 215.
7. Hayashiya, *Kōetsu*, map.
8. For the English translation of poems in this anthology, see also H. H. Honda, trans., *The Kokin Waka Shū: The Tenth-century Anthology Edited by the Imperial Edict* (Tokyo, 1970).
9. Minamoto Toyomune, *Kōetsu Shikishi Jō* (Kyoto, 1966).

Two Poems from the *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*  
(*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets, Selected at Mount Ogura*), a Section  
from the Poem Scroll with Lotus Design

Momoyama period

Calligraphy by Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637); designs  
by Sōtatsu (d. about 1640)

Gold and ink on paper

W. 60.3 x H. 32.8 cm (23 1/4 x 12 1/8 in.)

EX COLLECTION: Asada

PUBLISHED: Mizuo Hiroshi, *Sōtatsu-Kōrin Ha Gashū*  
(*The Paintings of Sōtatsu-Kōrin School*) (Kyoto,  
1966), IX, pl. 83; Hayashiya Tatsusaburō et al.,  
*Kōetsu* (Tokyo, 1964), p. 21; *Asada-ke Zōhin*  
*Nyūsatsu Mokuroku* (Tokyo, 1934), pl. 29.

The long handscroll from which this fragment was taken was formerly in the Ōkura collection and originally contained one hundred poems from the *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu* (*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*).<sup>1</sup> The anthology is traditionally attributed to Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), one of the greatest poets of ancient Japan (see no. 20), who is said to have edited this anthology at his country villa at Mount Ogura, giving the work its name. The anthology has long been a favorite of the Japanese, since the game using one hundred playing cards with these poems is an indispensable part of the New Year's Day celebration. The handscroll was severely damaged during the earthquake of 1923, and fifty-six poems—nos. 1–20, 28–32, 51–73, 81–85, 93, 94, and 98—were lost. The surviving sections have been divided among several collections.<sup>2</sup>

The scroll was composed of many sheets of paper dyed in different colors. Originally, the underdecorations in gold and silver described the entire life cycle of the lotus, from its nascency through its zenith and decline, ending enigmatically with a few flowers once again in full bloom. The large golden leaf in this frag-

ment stands erect, flanked by a segment of another leaf and a slender stalk. Since it depicts the lotus just before it begins to wane, this section would have been near the middle of the scroll: the long stem at the left belonged to a leaf riddled with insects, which was shown on a section that was destroyed in 1923.<sup>3</sup>

The large leaf here is painted in varying hues of gold on a slightly brown-tinted paper. Pools of gold ink, without harsh outlines, create amorphous patterns within the leaves. Sōtatsu, a great designer and painter of the early seventeenth century (see no. 51), is considered the artist of this elegant piece. Hon'ami Kōetsu, calligrapher and a frequent collaborator of Sōtatsu, wrote two poems over Sōtatsu's design. The first poem at the right, poem no. 79 of the anthology, was composed by Fujiwara Akisuke (1090–1155), whose name is cited here together with his official title, Sakyō Daibu (Minister of the Office of the East District). It reads:

How bright and clear  
is the harvest moon  
That shines through the cloud  
driven by the autumn wind!<sup>4</sup>

The second poem, at the left, no. 80, is a work by a twelfth-century poetess of the Fujiwara family, who is commonly known as Taikenmon-in Horikawa, as she served as a lady-in-waiting at the court of the empress dowager, Taikenmon-in. It reads:

As I wonder this morning  
how long the love of my beloved will endure,  
My thoughts wander in disarray  
like my long black hair.<sup>5</sup>

This scroll is dated slightly later than the two album pieces (no. 48), on the basis of the stylistic analysis of Kōetsu's calligraphy. His characters are slightly less bold and supple than in the earlier works, and the brushstrokes often end in pencil-sharp points, especially noticeable in the small-sized letters at the extreme left. His brushstrokes are at times extremely thin; on some his hand appears to have trembled. This effect

could be the result of rheumatism of the hands, which Kōetsu complained about in a letter dated to about 1612.<sup>6</sup> Certainly his calligraphic style appears to have changed slightly when he was age fifty or more. Thus, this scroll may be dated about 1615, shortly after Kōetsu moved to Takagamine and began using a studio name of Taikyo-an (The Studio of Great Emptiness), the name which is inscribed on another fragment from the scroll, now in an anonymous collection.<sup>7</sup>

Because of the importance of the lotus plant in Buddhist iconography, it has been suggested that Kōetsu meant this scroll as a memorial to his mother, who died in 1618.<sup>8</sup> The leaves and flowers toward the end of the scroll are delineated in less fluid lines, not in the *tarashikomi* technique as in this fragment. These are sometimes considered to be additions made by Kōetsu himself,<sup>9</sup> a suggestion that has a particular poignancy, since

it may explain the resurgence of the blossoms at the end of the scroll, after the plant's decline.

1. Ken Yasuda, *Poem Cards (The Hyakunin-issku in English)* (Tokyo, 1948).
2. For another section in a United States collection, see John Rosenfield and Shūjirō Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art: Selections from the Kimiko and John Powers Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), no. 107; Yamane Yūzō, *Sōtatsu* (Tokyo, 1962), p. 218.
3. Yamane, *Sōtatsu*, pp. 128–129.
4. Yasuda, *Poem Cards*, p. 40.
5. Ibid.
6. Hayashiya Tatsusaburō et al., *Kōetsu* (Tokyo, 1964), letter no. 59.
7. Ibid., p. 80.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 66.





Twelve Poems from the *Shin Kokin Waka Shū* (*The New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems*)

Momoyama period

Handscroll; gold on silk

H. 33.7 cm (13<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

Calligraphy by Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637); printed designs by a follower of Sōtatsu

SIGNATURE: "Kōetsu"; dated to the second year of the Gen'na era (1616)

SEALS: "Kōetsu," "Kamishi Sōji" on the back of the scroll

EX COLLECTION: Marquis Asano, Tokyo

This elegant silk handscroll includes twelve poems from the *Shin Kokin Waka Shū* (*The New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems*).<sup>1</sup> This anthology was compiled at the direction of the retired emperor, Gotoba (1180–1239), who, after his unsuccessful attempt to restore imperial power, spent his last nineteen years in exile on the remote island of Oki. The compilation was completed in 1205 by a committee headed by Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), the foremost poet of his time (see no. 20). The anthology is in twenty volumes and contains two thousand eight poems. These reflect the superb refinement of aristocratic taste and the brilliant

perfection of poetic technique that Japanese poets had achieved in a native idiom by the end of the Fujiwara period.

The *Shin Kokin Waka Shū* was the favorite subject for the artist Hon'ami Kōetsu, one of the most well known figures of the early seventeenth century (see no. 48), and it served him on many occasions. The twelve poems on this scroll, which are numbered consecutively from 515 through 526, are from the chapter on autumn, Kōetsu's favorite season. The poems reproduced here may be translated as follows:

No one comes for a visit on this path,  
Now that it is buried under the fallen leaves.

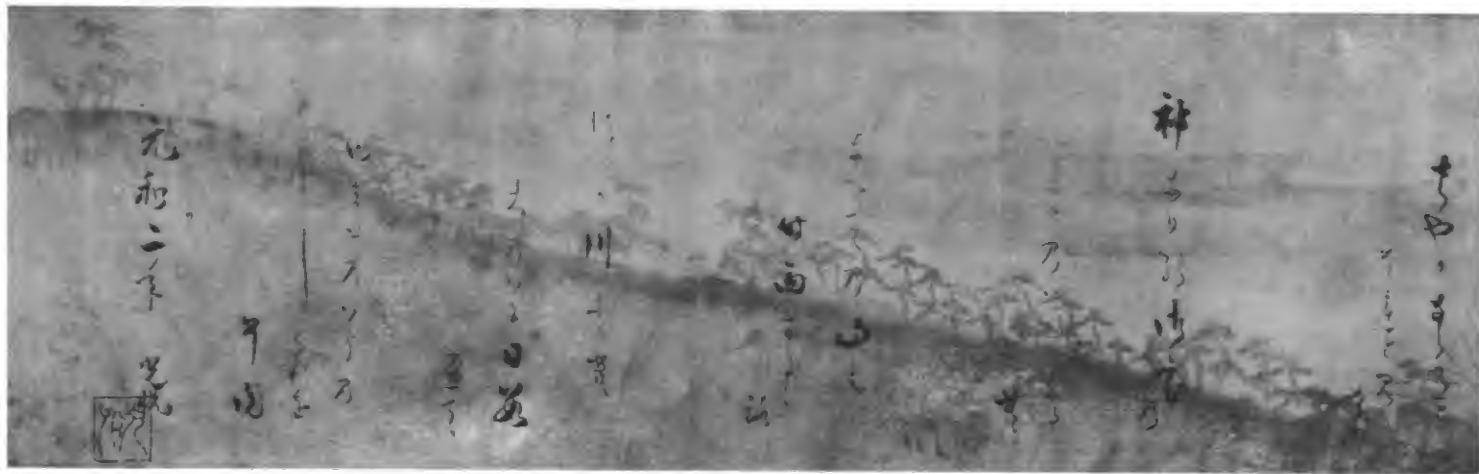
(Poem 515)

The color of autumn deepens  
on the Isle of Awaji.  
The salty breeze over the ocean  
fans away the fading glow  
of the morning moon.

(Poem 520)

How many mornings is it  
since September began?  
The golden countenance of the morning moon  
has turned rusty and forlorn.

(Poem 521)





The magpie's bridge of heaven  
is built of fluffy clouds.  
As the color of autumn deepens,  
the frost twinkles  
in the frigid night sky.

(Poem 522)

In these autumn days  
cold rain falls on all the mountains.  
I wonder how the trees are at Mount Mimuro,  
where ancient gods have resided for a long  
time.

(Poem 525)

Fallen leaves thickly cover  
the water of the Suzuka River.  
I count the days and listen  
to the sleet  
falling on the field of Yamada.

(Poem 526)

In this scroll Kōetsu's calligraphy shows sensitivity and restraint; individual letters are less tightly organized than they are in the scroll with lotus design (no. 49). The scroll is dated by inscription to 1616. Some doubts, however, have been expressed about the authenticity of the inscription, because its calligraphic style and ink tone are at variance with the text. Nevertheless, the calligraphic style of the text itself resembles that of the Kōetsu in the inscribed *tanzaku* (narrow strips of decorated paper) in the Yamatane Museum in Tokyo, which are dated to shortly before the Kan'ei era (1624–1644), when his calligraphies underwent yet

another change.<sup>2</sup> The Burke and Yamatane pieces may be dated around 1620. During the Kan'ei era, Kōetsu often chose Chinese poems or Chinese-inspired Japanese poems with more Chinese characters for his poem scrolls instead of the classical *waka* he preferred in his earlier period. Moreover, in his works of the Kan'ei period, the stylistic features characteristic of the Burke scroll and the Yamatane *tanzaku* are exaggerated.

This scroll is decorated with designs of several plants, which were imprinted by stamping. Sōtatsu often employed this technique in his poem scrolls. By using the small design-stamps, Sōtatsu was able to arrange an infinite variety of compositions with a limited repertory of motifs. All the design-stamps in this scroll were used in other poem scrolls of Sōtatsu in different combinations or arrangements, but the manner of arrangement here is not typical of Sōtatsu's work. For example, the designs are divided into a top and a bottom register, a form that differs from the boldness of others Sōtatsu decorated. The gold dust sprinkled throughout the scroll is not found in other works by Sōtatsu, and it may be a later addition. The designs on the Burke scroll were probably executed by a Sōtatsu follower, who used the stamps designed by the master for other projects.

The paper backing for this scroll is printed with a design of butterflies in gold, and the scroll begins and ends with two long seals, both reading "Kamishi Sōji." "Kamishi," or "paper masters," were decorators and mounters. Sōji, a leading *kamishi* in the capital, is mentioned frequently in Kōetsu's letters, and the butterfly



design may be his work. He was one of the craftsmen who moved to Takagamine with Kōetsu, and his house was across the street from that of the master. It is sometimes suggested that many of Sōtatsu's designs for paper were actually executed by Sōji, doubtlessly under the painter's close supervision.<sup>3</sup>

1. Some poems from this anthology were translated into English by Donald Keene in his *Anthology of Japanese Literature* (New York, 1960), pp. 192-196.
2. Minamoto Toyomune, *Yamatane Bijutsu-kan Zō Kōetsu Tanzaku Jō* (Kyoto, 1967), p. 5.
3. Hayashiya Tatsusaburō et al., *Kōetsu* (Tokyo, 1964), p. 93.



## Nine Scenes from the *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*)

Momoyama period

Sōtatsu (d. about 1640)

Eight-fold screen; color on gilded paper

W. 327 x H. 81 cm (128<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 31<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Sōtatsu Hokkyō"

SEAL: "Taisei-ken"

EX COLLECTION: Yoshioka Tajūrō, Kanazawa  
Prefecture

PUBLISHED: Miyeko Murase, *Byōbu: Japanese Screens from New York Collections* (New York, 1971), no. 1; Yamane Yūzō, *Sōtatsu* (Tokyo, 1962), pls. 42, 43; Tanaka Kisaku, "Studies on Sōtatsu," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 20 (August 1933), pp. 366–367.

In spite of the enormous popularity of the Rimpa artist Sōtatsu, to whom a large number of stunning paintings are attributed, he still remains a historically elusive figure. Nothing is known about his family background or his early training in painting. Although "Nonomura" or "Tawaraya" are often affixed to his name, his true family name is uncertain. One of his letters and occasional references to him or his paintings by court nobles, essayists, artists, a tea master, and a novelist are the only documents about his life.<sup>1</sup> Scholars are slowly reconstructing Sōtatsu's professional career, and only recently an outline of his artistic personality has begun to emerge.

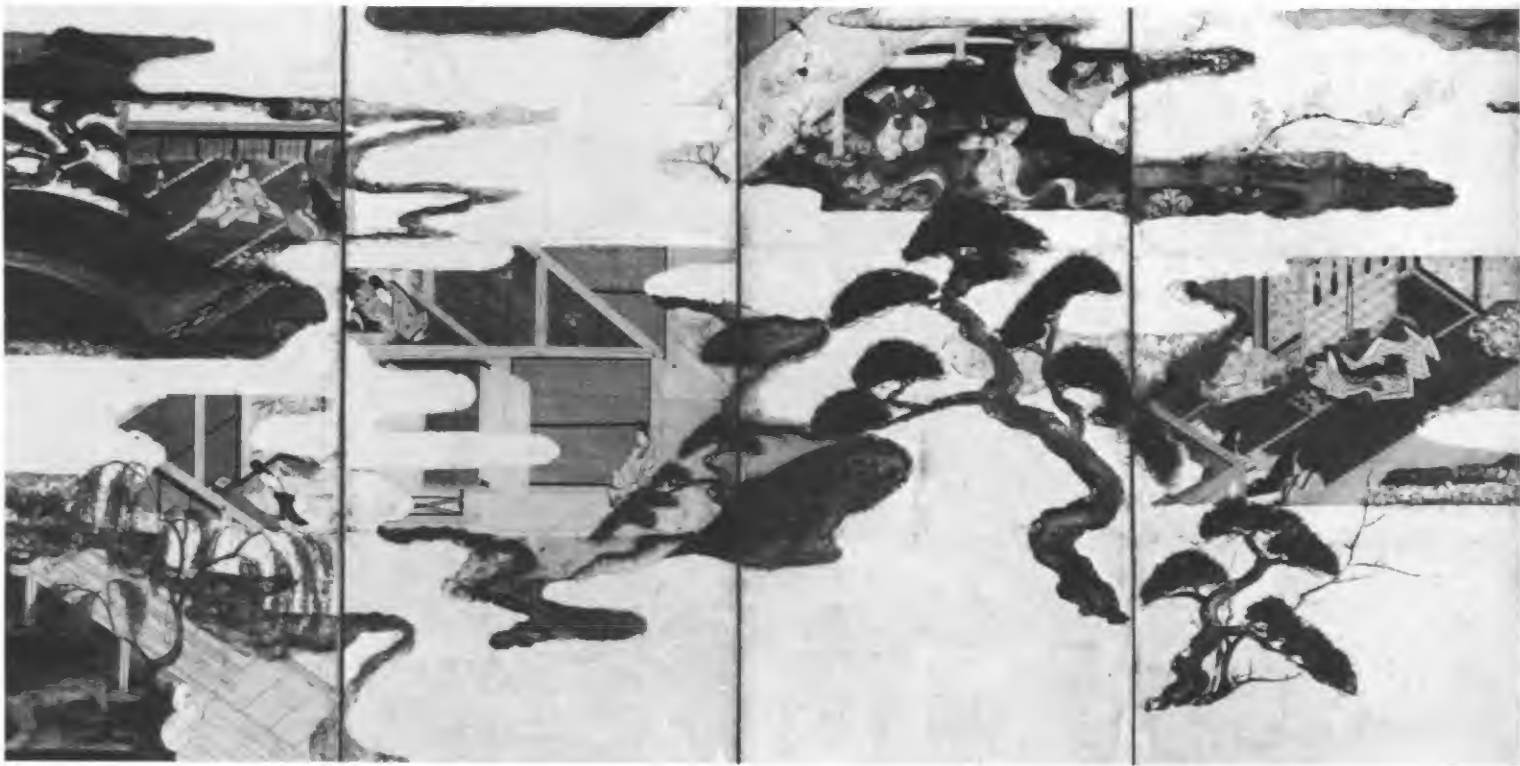
Sōtatsu's place of birth is uncertain, but the date is estimated to be around 1560. According to a genealogical chart in the possession of the Kataoka family, he married a cousin of Hon'ami Kōetsu (no. 48).<sup>2</sup> Sōtatsu was the proprietor of a shop in Kyoto called the Tawaraya, which may have made and sold painted fans. His shop was probably one of many specialty shops mentioned in Momoyama literature that made and sold a variety of painted objects besides fans: lantern paper, seashells for games, *shikishi* (decorated heavy paper squares for painting or calligraphy), and *tanzaku* (decorated paper strips). They also made designs for

kimono, took commissions to decorate building interiors, and even made dolls.

Presumably because of the nature of the work in his shop, Sōtatsu advanced at an unknown time from a strictly commercial, anonymous craftsman to a professional painter of special talent. The earliest paintings attributed to him are the frontispieces and covers he made in 1602 as replacements for three scrolls of the *Heike Nōkyō*, the twelfth-century set of sutras belonging to the Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima in the Inland Sea. These small, modest works show aesthetic features characteristic of Sōtatsu's later paintings. The six paintings have no religious themes or human figures, but are limited to five landscapes and a design featuring a single deer. His landscape motifs are drastically stylized abstract patterns, which later became Rimpa trademarks, and he emphasizes the sheer decorativeness of surfaces by limiting his palette to gold and silver.

A collaboration between the two geniuses of painting and calligraphy, Sōtatsu and Kōetsu, seems to have begun a few years later with the *Saga-bon* project. About 1606, Sumikura Soan (1571–1632) launched an ambitious publishing venture to reproduce handsome books with reproductions of favorite pieces of classical literature. Sōtatsu designed the decorated paper to be used for the covers, and Kōetsu wrote calligraphy to be carved on woodblocks for the text. After the *Saga* project, the two men produced numerous other works, including many poem scrolls. Sōtatsu also decorated a large number of *shikishi*. Two of these with Kōetsu's calligraphy are included here (no. 48). Sōtatsu had a secondary role in these projects. His paper designs were not appreciated for their own merits but rather as the background for fine calligraphy. With the exception of the well-known *Deer Scroll*, which features a herd of animals, these designs are limited to flowers and birds, usually viewed from very close range. The color scheme, as in the *Heike Sutra*, is primarily gold or silver with only occasional color, and some of the designs were stamped. None includes Sōtatsu's signature, but a few seals show the name "Inen," which has come to be associated with him.

During the early years of the seventeenth century, Sōtatsu's Tawaraya shop established a reputation for

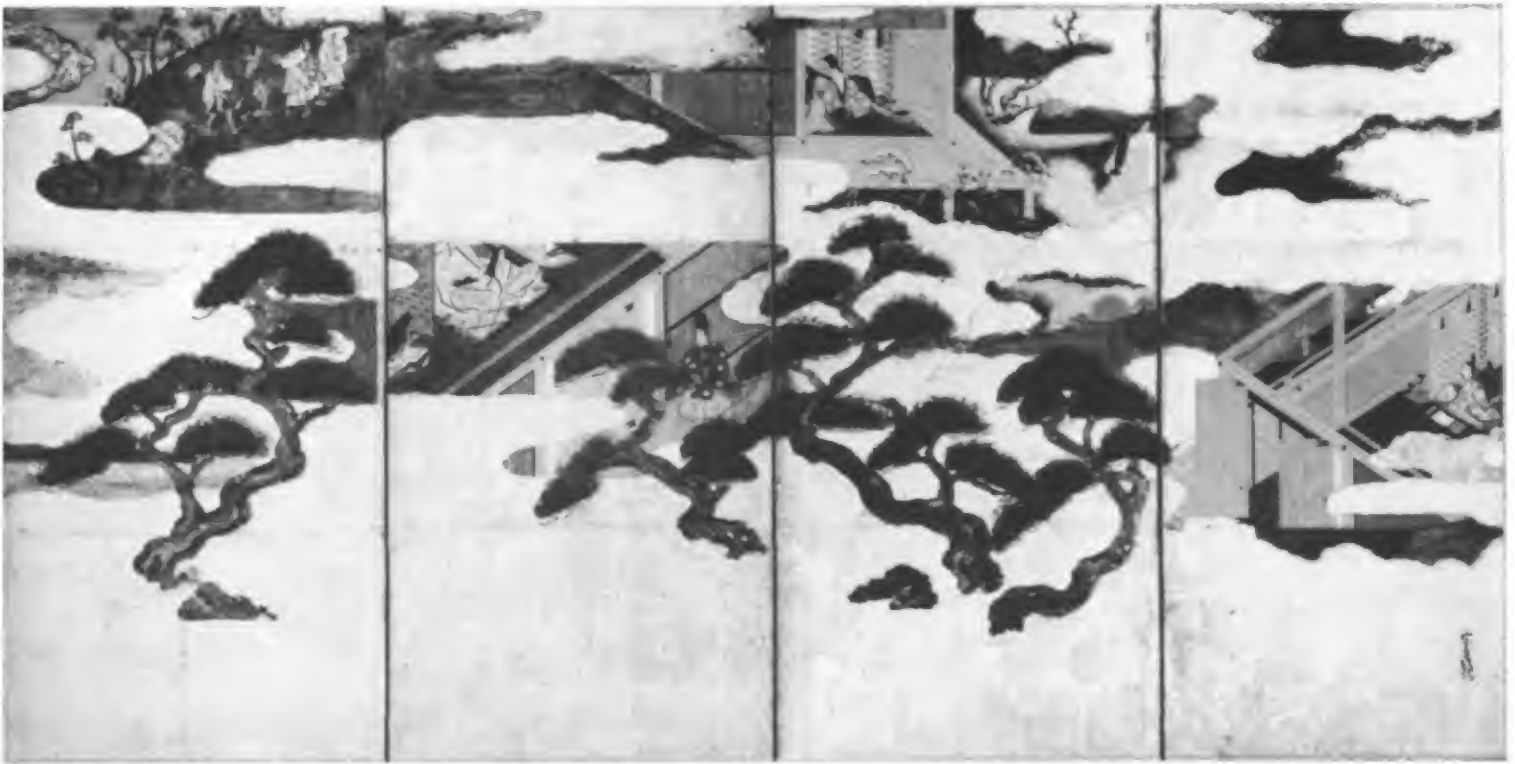


artistic excellence among cultivated and wealthy circles in Kyoto. For example, in 1616, a leading nobleman, Nakano-in Michimura, mentions in his diary a “Tawaraya picture” with red maple leaves scattered around a deer. Sōtatsu’s success as an artist allowed him notable social advancement, so that he was able to invite a leading tea master, Sen no Shōan (1546–1614), to his own tea ceremony.<sup>3</sup> After Kōetsu moved to Takagamine on the outskirts of Kyoto in 1615, Sōtatsu’s collaboration with him continued until around 1620. The date was a turning point in Sōtatsu’s career; about this time he clearly moved from the class of superior designer and was recognized as a major artist.

The most important aspect of Sōtatsu’s second phase is narrative figure painting in the format of a monumental screen. Current evidence indicates that Sōtatsu took up figure painting late in his career, but no clues are available to explain this transformation. None of Sōtatsu’s figure paintings are connected with Kōetsu, and the majority of his important paintings include qualities that never appeared in his paper designs. In addition to a signature, accompanied by the title

“Hokkyō,” which is a high priestly rank usually awarded to successful artists, the paintings include large round seals with the word “Taisei,” or “Taisei-ken.” Sōtatsu is believed to have been awarded the honorary “Hokkyō” title after he successfully decorated doors and screens for the Yōgen-in, a temple in Kyoto rebuilt in 1621 at the order of the wife of Tokugawa Hidetada, the second Tokugawa shogun.

Narrative paintings in the small format of fans and album leaves, without Sōtatsu’s signature or seal, are often dated to the later phase of his career. The earliest reference to a painting associated with Sōtatsu’s name, depicting a narrative theme occurs in the *Chikusai*, a humorous travelogue of a country doctor who visited Kyoto and Edo as a tourist.<sup>4</sup> Isoda Michiharu, who wrote the *Chikusai* sometime between 1621 and 1623, mentions a “Tawaraya fan” with *Genji* episodes in brilliant colors. Sōtatsu relied exclusively on narrative themes drawn from classical literature as sources for his figure paintings, and the most innovative aspect of his work is the reuse, in a totally new context, of pictorial elements borrowed from ancient *emaki-mono*.<sup>5</sup>



Sōtatsu's interest in classical themes and in the traditional *yamato-e* style may have been stimulated by his association with Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638), an eccentric court noble well known for his interest in classical literature, who is said to have been Kōetsu's pupil in calligraphy. Sōtatsu's direct association with Mitsuhiro is documented in a colophon attached to a four-scroll set of *Saigyō Scrolls*, now in the Morikawa collection (ex Mōri collection) in Japan. In this colophon, written in 1630, Mitsuhiro attests that he wrote the text for the *emaki* and that Sōtatsu painted the pictures, and their model was a set of *Saigyō Scrolls* in the Imperial collection.

Sōtatsu's reputation probably reached its peak around 1630, the year he painted some screens for Emperor Gomizunō (1596–1680), who was profoundly sympathetic to the classical tradition of Japanese arts and letters. Sōtatsu's death is not recorded in any document, but he probably died around 1640. According to traditional practice, the "Hokkyō" title awarded to the master of a school or shop is passed on to a successor when the first master dies, and sometime between 1639 and

1642, Sōsetsu inherited this title (see no. 53).

The *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*), Murasaki Shikibu's novel of the early eleventh century, is discussed in greater detail in nos. 57, 58, and 59. Sōtatsu's *Genji screen*, a rather small, eight-panel screen showing episodes from this romance, uses a number of *emaki* conventions developed in the twelfth century. A wide band of gold occupies almost one-third of the entire height of the screen. Pines with twisted trunks and branches grow out of this golden sand. Fingerlike cloud patterns in gold are a common *emaki* device; here they are used to divide the remaining picture surface into a series of compartments. In order to allow the viewer to see directly into building interiors, roofs are eliminated, a *yamato-e* convention known as *fukimuke-yatai* ("houses with blown-off roofs"). The faces of youthful noblemen and long-haired court ladies who inhabit these houses are represented simply: eyes are represented with a single brushstroke, and noses are formed by a hooked stroke, a technique commonly employed in *emaki* of the Fujiwara and Kamakura periods that illustrated courtly romances.



Nine episodes are illustrated. With the exception of the eighth, or left-hand panel, each panel shows one scene from seven different chapters, numbers 19 through 25. The last panel represents two episodes from chapter 26.<sup>6</sup> The consecutive order of the scenes illustrated suggests that many additional screens accompanied this one: probably the entire fifty-four chapters of the novel were illustrated in the set. Two or three other screens of this type have been reported, although most of them are now mounted as hanging scrolls.<sup>7</sup> In such a large set, each screen would have illustrated about six or eight chapters with one or two scenes from each chapter. This type would deviate from a standard model attributed to Kanō or Tosa artists, where all fifty-four scenes are squeezed onto a pair of six-fold screens (see no. 58).

Most of the scenes represented here follow standard compositional types used by artists belonging to different schools. The notable exception is the scene at the top of the fourth panel (from the right). It illustrates chapter 22, the “Tamakatsura” episode, which describes how Tamakatsura, who had been reared in secrecy in Kyūshū, makes her way back to the capital in search of her father.<sup>8</sup> The journey is long, and the young woman, accompanied by several attendants, leads the slow uphill climb toward their destination. In standard *Genji* screens, this episode depicts Tamakatsura and her party traveling by boat from Kyūshū through the Inland Sea and is placed at the bottom of the panel. Sōtatsu set the scene at the top, thus preserving the continuity of the background setting. Fewer figures are used here, and architectural settings are less obtrusive than in standard *Genji* pictures. Each individual scene is compact, resembling the composition of a smaller format such as a *shikishi*. In fact, the entire screen seems to have been composed of painted *shikishi* scattered among the pines and on the golden background. Some screens attributed to the Sōtatsu school are decorated with *shikishi* that illustrate *Genji* scenes. For example, the *shikishi* pasted on a pair of six-fold screens belonging to the Ōkura Shūko-kan in Tokyo resembles the scenes here.

A seal and the signature, “Sōtatsu Hokkyō,” appear in the lower right corner of the screen. The large,

round “Taisei-ken” seal (7.7 cm in diameter) can be found on a number of scrolls and screens associated with Sōtatsu’s name, and it is frequently used in combination with one of two signatures, “Hokkyō Sōtatsu” or “Sōtatsu Hokkyō.” According to Yamane Yūzō,<sup>9</sup> “Hokkyō Sōtatsu” is the correct order, because the title should precede the personal name. Yamane asserts that the reverse order, “Sōtatsu Hokkyō,” is less formal, implying “the studio of Sōtatsu who was a Hokkyō,” and not, “Sōtatsu with the title of Hokkyō.” Although most artists with this title placed it before their personal names in a signature, Karasumaru Mitsuhiro wrote “Sōtatsu Hokkyō” in the colophon for the *Saigyō Scrolls* written in 1630.

Characteristic features of the Sōtatsu style are particularly evident in the landscape passages of this screen and in the use of the *tarashikomi* technique, which is a method of applying dark ink or colors over wash to create a blurred effect. The colorful brilliance and charm of the paintings remind us of the remark in *Chikusai* that Tawaraya fans illustrating *Genji* scenes are the best ones sold in the capital. Since figures are, however, much more delicate than those found in other paintings generally accepted as genuine works by Sōtatsu, the screen here may represent Sōtatsu’s early figure painting.



1. These documentary materials are discussed in full by Yamane Yūzō in *Sōtatsu* (Tokyo, 1962), pp. 238–250; see also Miyeko Murase, “Fan Paintings Attributed to Sōtatsu: Their Themes and Prototypes,” *Arts Orientalis* IX (1973), pp. 52–54.
2. Yamane, *Sōtatsu*, p. 248; Robert T. Paine and Alexander C. Soper, *Art and Architecture of Japan*, rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1975), p. 215.
3. Yamane, *Sōtatsu*, p. 243.
4. Edward Putzar, *Chikusai*, Monumenta Nipponica, vol. XVI, nos. 1–2 (Tokyo, 1960–1961).
5. For this problem, see Murase, “Fan Paintings.”
6. For the exact passages from the novel illustrated on this screen, see Miyeko Murase, *Byobū: Japanese Screens from New York Collections* (New York, 1971), no. 1.
7. Yamane, *Sōtatsu*, p. 210.
8. Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York, 1960), pp. 434–466.
9. Yamane, *Sōtatsu*, pp. 228–237.

*Detail, second panel from right*



“Utsu no Yama,” an Episode from the  
*Ise Monogatari* (*The Tales of Ise*)

Momoyama period

Sōtatsu (d. about 1640)

Originally an album leaf, now remounted as a hanging  
scroll; color and gold on paper

H. 24.4 x W. 20.8 cm (9<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

EX COLLECTION: Masuda Takashi

PUBLISHED: Yamane Yūzō, “Tawaraya Sōtatsu and  
Illustrated Scrolls of *Ise Monogatari* and *Shikongō-  
shin Engi*,” *Kokka* 977 (February 1975), p. 19;  
Yamane Yūzō, “Study on the *Ise Monogatari*  
*Shikishi* Attributed to Sōtatsu,” *Yamato Bunka* 59  
(March 1974), fig. 14; Tokyo National Museum,  
*Rimpa* (Tokyo, 1972), pl. 99; Yamane Yūzō, *Sōtatsu*  
(Tokyo, 1962), pl. 174; Tanaka Kisaku, *Den Sōtatsu*  
*Hitsu Ise Monogatari Zu* (Tokyo, 1941), pl. 23;  
Tanaka Shimbi, *Sōtatsu Hitsu Ise Monogatari*  
(Tokyo, 1932), pl. 10.

The small, polychrome album leaf (see frontispiece) illustrates an episode from a tenth-century book entitled the *Ise Monogatari* (*The Tales of Ise*),<sup>1</sup> which ranks with the *Tale of Genji* as one of Japan’s literary classics. The tale is composed of poems interspersed with connecting narrative vignettes or prose settings that describe the travels in Japan of a gentleman, who is merely identified as “a man.” Most of these poems are love poems exchanged between the anonymous hero and various ladies whom he meets. The scene represented here illustrates an episode in chapter 9, a journey to the eastern sector of Japan. The passage, known as the “Utsu no Yama,” includes the poem that was inscribed on the painting by an anonymous calligrapher:

... On they journeyed to the province of Suruga.  
At Mount Utsu the road they were to follow was  
dark, narrow, and overgrown with ivy vines and  
maples. As they contemplated it with dismal fore-  
bodings, a wandering ascetic appeared and asked,  
“What are you doing on a road like this?” The

man, recognizing him as someone he had once  
known by sight, gave him a message for a lady in  
the capital:

Beside Mount Utsu

In Suruga

I can see you

Neither waking

Nor, alas, even in my dreams.<sup>2</sup>

The painting still preserves almost all of the original pigments—brilliant greens, blues, and gold. Rocks and hills are painted without ink outlines, creating soft, round forms that are typical of works of Sōtatsu, also the artist of no. 51. A zigzag path defining the composition is emphasized by a figure placed at each of three major bends in the trail. A triangular section of plain gold with fluid calligraphic lines in the upper right corner balances the massive horse and attendant on the lower left. The mendicant with a wooden knapsack on his back is pictured as if walking away from the courtier after their encounter.

Altogether forty-seven album leaves illustrating episodes from the *Ise Monogatari* are known today, and all are attributed to Sōtatsu. Four of these are in American collections: in addition to this one are others in the collections of Mrs. George Bunting, Shawnee Mission, Kansas; The Cleveland Museum; and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.<sup>3</sup> The entire group is painted in brilliant colors, and a short poetry text appears on all but five of them. While they are similar in style, slight differences suggest that more than one painter was responsible for them, and it is doubtful that they belonged to a single set. Two *shikishi* have identical compositions, one accompanied by a text, another alone. Recently, when some of the *shikishi* were remounted and their paper backing was removed, seventeen names of the calligraphers who wrote the texts were discovered on the back of the papers.<sup>4</sup> According to the biographical records for these calligraphers, it seems that the project of making these *shikishi* took a long time—at least eleven years, from 1634 to 1644.

Illustrated versions of the *Ise Monogatari* were already popular in the eleventh century, and they are mentioned in the “E-awase” (“Picture Competition”)

chapter of the *Tale of Genji*. However, no examples from the Fujiwara period are known today, and the earliest extant illustrated versions are a few fragments from the Kamakura period. Versions of the illustrated *Ise Monogatari* that are almost intact are printed books published in the seventeenth century as part of the *Saga-bon* project. However, a late-Kamakura handscroll of the tale was still complete in 1838, when seven Kanō artists worked together to copy it. The nineteenth-century copy, now in the Tokyo National Museum, preserves the complete text and all pictures of the lost original, as well as a copy of a colophon added to the scroll in 1636 by Karasumaru Mitsuhiro, a court noble who frequently collaborated with Sōtatsu.<sup>5</sup> In the colophon Mitsuhiro states that he examined the original Kamakura handscroll in 1636 and dates the scroll in the late Kamakura period. Mitsuhiro also points out that the text of the scroll belonged to a rare recension of the *Ise Monogatari* known as the version of the “Imperial Huntsman,” which includes only twenty-four episodes. *Ise* texts, such as the printed book in the *Saga-bon* series, usually belong to the Teika version, the most common edition of the tale, which contains one hundred twenty-five episodes.

Since the illustrations in the *Saga-bon* version of the *Ise Monogatari* are distinctly different from the nineteenth-century copy of the Kamakura scroll, it is clear that there were at least two pictorial traditions for the tale. It is possible that when Mitsuhiro examined the

Kamakura scroll in 1636, his associate Sōtatsu had a chance to copy the pictures and may later have adapted them to his own *Ise* compositions. Some leaves are clearly derived from the Kamakura compositions; others are related to the *Saga-bon* illustrations. The “Mount Utsu” episode in the Burke collection is modeled after the *Saga* version but with slight changes in the postures of the three figures, inspired by earlier *emaki*.<sup>6</sup> Sōtatsu’s depiction of this episode became a very popular composition with many later Rimpa artists—among them, Ogata Kōrin, Fukae Roshū, and Sakai Hōitsu, who frequently used this as a model for their own works.

Since the *shikishi* in the Burke collection is regarded as artistically one of the best examples among the forty-seven *Ise* leaves, it is probably Sōtatsu’s own work.

1. Helen Craig McCullough, *Ise Monogatari: Lyrical Episodes from Tenth-century Japan* (Stanford, California, 1968).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
3. All three are reproduced by Harold P. Stern, *Rimpa: Masterworks of the Japanese Decorative School* (New York, 1971), nos. 9–11.
4. Yamane Yūzō, *Sōtatsu* (Tokyo, 1962), p. 226; Itō Toshiko, “Study on the Texts of the *Ise Monogatari Shikishi*, Attributed to Sōtatsu,” *Yamato Bunka* 59 (March 1974), pp. 28–30.
5. Shimbō Tōru, “On the Illustrated Scrolls of *Ise Monogatari*,” *Museum* 241 (April 1971), pp. 12–24.
6. Yamane Yūzō, “Tawaraya Sōtatsu and Illustrated Scrolls of *Ise Monogatari* and *Shikongō-shin Engi*,” *Kokka* 977 (February 1975), p. 19.

## Flowers of Summer and Autumn

Edo period (first half of the seventeenth century)

Studio of Sōtatsu

Diptych of hanging scrolls; color and gold on paper

Each scroll; H. 130.9 x W. 49.5 cm (51 ½ x 19 ½ in.)

SEAL: "Inen" on both scrolls

Flowers in bloom from late spring to early autumn are mingled on these two paintings. Among those on the right scroll are irises, gentian, and azaleas. On the left, lilies, clematis, thistles, and small magnolias burst out exuberantly under the curved branches of a chestnut tree. Blossoms are painted in bright colors and thick white, but their leaves are painted with ink alone, so that the flowers stand out clearly against the background, decorated with only a sprinkling of gold dust. No ink outlines are used to delineate the plant leaves, but dark ink is applied over the light wash in the technique known as *tarashikomi* to create a smudged effect. The *tarashikomi* technique is employed frequently. Peculiar spots on the leaves may be scorched effects created by the mineral agents of some pigments.

Large (5.9 cm in diameter) round seals that read "Inen" are impressed on both scrolls. The same seal is found on many similar paintings—simple wild flowers portrayed by no other artists but the Rimpa painters. Also, a circular form created by the arching branches of the chestnut tree in the left scroll resembles the geometric patterns often found in the flower paintings with "Inen" seals. These "Inen" pictures are often attributed either to Sōtatsu (see nos. 51, 52), to Sōtatsu's studio, or to Tawaraya Sōsetsu.

The life of Sōsetsu, like Sōtatsu's, still eludes our scrutiny. He is sometimes believed to have been Sōtatsu's younger brother or his son. Although a family tie between the two might not have existed, their works are stylistically very close. Yōjuji, a Buddhist temple in Sakai, near Osaka, once owned the only documented examples of Sōsetsu's paintings. Unfortunately, the paintings were destroyed during World War II, leaving





only the temple record. It is dated in 1639 and refers to the subjects of the four door-paintings and their artist: plums and bamboo, tiger and bamboo, deer and maple leaves, and pines in snow—these were painted by “Tawaraya Sōsetsu.”<sup>1</sup> Three years later, in 1642, a painting of red millets is mentioned in the diary, *Kakumei Ki*, of the monk Hōrin Shōshō (1593–1668) of Kinkakuji in Kyoto. The artist of this painting is identified as “Hokkyō Sōsetsu.”<sup>2</sup> These two documents imply that Sōsetsu was a member of Sōtatsu’s Tawaraya shop, perhaps second-in-command, and he used the first part of Sōtatsu’s name in his own name. In 1639 he was still “Tawaraya Sōsetsu,” while three years later he was called “Hokkyō Sōsetsu.” It seems, then, that Sōtatsu passed away during these three years, leaving the leadership of his shop and his honorary title of Hokkyō to his successor.

About one hundred years later, Hori Naotada (1806–1880), author of the *Fusō Meiga Den*, commented that many so-called Sōtatsu paintings he had seen were actually painted by Sōsetsu.<sup>3</sup> Hori’s statement succinctly summarizes the problem surrounding the attribution of Sōsetsu’s paintings. Clearly, Sōsetsu continued to work in the style established by Sōtatsu, but he seems to have specialized in decorative flower paintings rather than his predecessor’s choice of narrative paintings. Some of the paintings with Inen seals are attributed to Sōtatsu, but the seal is believed to have also been used as the mark of the shop. There is no definite basis at this time for attributing these two scrolls to Sōsetsu, and they may be assigned tentatively to the Sōtatsu school.



1. Yamane Yūzō, *Sōtatsu* (Tokyo, 1962), p. 249.
2. Akamatsu Toshihide, ed., *Kakumei Ki* (Tokyo, 1958), I, p. 422.
3. Hori Naotada, ed., *Fusō Meiga Den*, Shiryō Taikan, ed. Takatō Chūzō (Tokyo, 1899), p. 631.



## Flowers of Spring and Autumn

Edo period

Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716)

Pair of panels; ink and color on cryptomeria wood

Each, H. 137.2 x W. 19.9 cm (54½ x 7⅞ in.)

SIGNATURE: “Hokkyō Kōrin” on the panel of spring flowers

SEAL: “Koresuke” on both panels

EX COLLECTIONS: Hosomi Ryō, Osaka; Inoue Tatsukurō

PUBLISHED: Mizuo Hiroshi, ed., *Sōtatsu Kōrin Ha Gashū* (*The Paintings of Sōtatsu-Kōrin School*) (Kyoto, 1965), III, pl. 68; Tanaka Ichimatsu, ed., *Kōrin* (*The Art of Kōrin*) (Tokyo, 1959), fig. 1; Yamauchi Naosaburō, ed., *Kōrin Zuroku* (Kyoto, 1918), no pl. no.

Next to the artists of woodblock prints, Ogata Kōrin is perhaps the best-known Japanese artist in the West, and his works reflect a truly indigenous taste. Prolific and extremely versatile, Kōrin painted in different styles, in many different formats, frequently utilizing themes derived from Japanese classical literature, which he transformed into vividly fresh, bold abstract patterns in brilliant colors. Kōrin’s designs succinctly express the major characteristics of paintings and objects created by the decorative artists called Rimpa. While other artists working in this style preceded him, it was quite natural that the last part of his name was later adopted to denote the entire group called Rimpa, meaning “(Kō)rin school.” Kōrin’s popularity was so great that only a century after his death, Tani Bunchō (1763–1840), in the collection of his essays, the *Bunchō Gadan*, was prompted to warn the public against the many forgeries of Kōrin’s works which caught his attention.<sup>1</sup> Some of Kōrin’s ardent nineteenth-century followers tried to establish the artist’s genuine œuvre: Sakai Hōitsu (1761–1828) published the *Kōrin Hyaku Zu* (*One Hundred Selections from Kōrin*) in 1815, and Ikeda Koson (1802–1867), in 1864, the *Shinsen Kōrin Hyaku Zu* (*New One Hundred Selections from Kōrin*). Together, the two books cover more than three

hundred specimens of Kōrin’s paintings and designs for objects accepted as Kōrin’s work at the times of their publication. Another group of materials, known generally as the “Konishi Documents,” also provides insights into the intimate details of the artist’s life.<sup>2</sup> They include Kōrin’s family papers, his personal correspondence, diaries, sketches from life, and his copies of old paintings. Until recently, these were preserved intact by the Konishi family, whose ancestors had adopted Kōrin’s son. They are now divided between the Osaka Municipal Museum and a private collection in Tokyo.

Kōrin’s earliest known ancestor was a minor warrior in the service of the Ashikaga shogun. Ogata Dōhaku, from the second generation, became a successful clothing merchant, using the business name of Karigane-ya. He designed and manufactured kimono for the imperial family and the Toyotomi family, one of whom, Tōfukumon-in, was notable as the consort of the emperor Gomizunō. The successive heads of the Ogata family typified the cultivated, businessmen-gentlemen of the capital who were trained in the arts and were also active patrons of the arts. Dōhaku was married to Kōetsu’s sister, and his son Sōhaku, Kōrin’s grandfather, lived at Takagamine near the home of Kōetsu after the latter moved there in 1615 (see nos. 48–50). Ogata Sōken (1621–1687), Kōrin’s father, was an accomplished painter and calligrapher, whose influence on Kōrin’s early artistic career might have been greater than is usually acknowledged.

Kōrin spent much of his youth as the well-protected son of a wealthy and established businessman. He was thoroughly trained in the gentlemanly accomplishments of literature, calligraphy, painting, and the Noh performance. He is generally believed to have studied painting with a minor Kanō artist, Yamamoto Soken (d. 1706). Kōrin’s happy, if somewhat irresponsible youth ended abruptly with his father’s death in 1687. Even before this tragic event, the Ogata family business had suffered a severe loss of patronage as wealth shifted gradually from the old aristocracy to the emerging middle-class merchants. Thus, Kōrin found himself in serious financial difficulties and was forced to find a means of supporting himself.



Around 1692, perhaps as an attempt to improve his situation, Kōrin changed the spelling of his name, preserving the old pronunciation but adopting a set of new Chinese characters that may be interpreted to mean “shining gems.” He kept this new spelling for the rest of his life and signed it on many paintings. For the next few years Kōrin’s financial predicaments seem to have worsened. Finally, he began his professional career as a painter by decorating pottery made by his younger brother Kenzan (1663–1743), who opened a potter’s kiln in 1699 at Narutaki, in the northwest of Kyoto (see no. 56). Thus, for the next few years, these two cultivated gentlemen-artists worked together to create some of the most beautiful pottery of the Edo period. Soon afterward, Kōrin’s paintings apparently gained proper recognition; in 1701 he was granted the title of Hokkyō, a high honor reserved for artists of unusual distinction. From about 1704, Kōrin began to commute between Kyoto and Edo, perhaps attracted by the more affluent patronage available in the bustling modern eastern city of Edo. He is reported to have made at least two trips to Edo: once in 1704 to 1705, and again in 1707 to 1709. However, his Edo sojourns were not particularly happy, so he spent the last few years of his life enjoying the congenial company of the declining court aristocracy in Kyoto.

Nearly all of Kōrin’s paintings bear his signature “Kōrin” and the title “Hokkyō.” Since very few of his works are known from the period before 1701 when he received this title, the early phase of his art remains unclear. Above everything else, however, Kōrin’s family background seems to have greatly determined his urbane, sophisticated, and charming artistic style. Many of his dramatic designs also reveal his knowledge of textile designs and techniques. At the same time, his early association with cultivated court nobles deepened his appreciation of traditional arts and literature. Also at the basis of Kōrin’s art is his deep admiration for the aesthetic ideals shared by the greatest early Rimpa masters, Kōetsu and Sōtatsu, to whom he was distantly related. He once owned a lacquer box by Kōetsu, and a screen painting by Sōtatsu. Among Kōrin’s œuvre are a number of faithful copies after

Sôtatsu's designs. His simple, brilliant designs derived from classical narrative paintings consummate the aesthetic aspirations of Kôetsu and Sôtatsu, and embody the quintessence of Rimpa art and its ideals.

The paintings here represent two important aspects of Kôrin's art: decorative paintings of flowers and ink paintings of Chinese subjects. The two narrow, dark panels may originally have belonged to a set of four, each one depicting the representative flower of one of the four seasons. On the right panel is a single motif of white plum blossoms, harbinger of spring. Small white blossoms stand out clearly against the darkened and fine-grained texture of the rich brown wood, and the leafless branches of the tree are painted in dark ink. The composition is simple, the colors limited to black and white. They are most appropriate for the painting of early spring, when no other flowers are yet in sight. On the lower right-hand corner of this panel are Kôrin's signature, reading "Hokkyô Kôrin," and his round seal, "Koresuke." The same seal without the signature is shown on the companion panel. This panel depicts

flowers and grasses of late summer and autumn months: morning glories, chrysanthemums, pampas grasses, and white and blue bellflowers. The exuberant white, pink, and red of the chrysanthemums stand out sharply against the dark tone of the wood and the muted colors of the other flowers.

Both panels are slightly curved with an almost imperceptible hump in the middle. It is not quite certain how and where these panels were originally meant to be displayed. At any rate, they would have made handsome and unusual decorations, as the wood is a more natural backdrop for the flowers than paper or silk. Since the panel of plum blossoms includes the Hokkyô title in his signature, this work can be dated in the last fifteen years of Kôrin's life.

1. Sakazaki Shizuka, *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), p. 799.
2. Yamane Yûzô, *Konishi-ke Kyûzô Kôrin Kankei Shiryô to sono Kenkyû: Shiryô* (*The Life and Work of Kôrin: The Konishi Collection*), I (Tokyo, 1962).





## 55

### Hotei

Edo period

Ogata Kōrin (1658–1716)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

W. 36.9 x H. 28.5 cm (14<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Jakumyō Kōrin"

SEAL: "Dōsū"

EX COLLECTION: Hara Tomitarō, Kanagawa  
Prefecture

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu, ed., *Kōrin (The Art of Kōrin)* (Tokyo, 1959), fig. 42; Uemura Masurō, *Kōrin* (Tokyo, 1940), fig. 110; Yamauchi Naosaburō, ed., *Kōrin Zuroku* (Kyoto, 1918), no pl. no.

Hotei, a half-mythological, half-historical figure of Zen Buddhism, was drawn several times by Kōrin at various times in his career. Hotei (Pu-tai, in Chinese) is one of the most popular deities of Zen.<sup>1</sup> He is believed to have lived at Ssu-ming Mountain in south China from the late ninth to the early tenth centuries. Pot-bellied and bald, this taciturn, blissful man is known to have roamed about the countryside carrying only a few belongings in a patched cloth bag. He was later believed to be an avatar of Buddha Maitreya (Miroku, in Japanese). He was also accepted into the folk beliefs in China and Japan, where he was incorporated as one

of the Seven Gods of Fortune (Shichi Fukujin, in Japanese). Beginning in the Muromachi period in Japan, almost all painters—regardless of their religious inclinations—painted this friendly and cheerful deity.

Kōrin's paintings of Chinese mythological and historical personages usually differ from conventional interpretations in that he often transformed them into humorous characters. His personal sense of wit is especially evident in this painting, where Hotei sits leaning on the bag that is his inseparable companion. The bag resembles his potbelly. His mouth wide open, Hotei seems to laugh at this cunning deception that he plays upon his viewer. The bag is drawn by sharp lines in light ink, creating a stark contrast against four patches of pitch black ink which describe the tip and base of the pole with which Hotei carries his bag, and two sleeves around his upper arms. Here, Kōrin loaded the brush with dark ink and, by laying it on its side to form two broad strokes, he "wrote" the sleeves.

As is customary among Far Eastern artists, Kōrin used many different names and seals. The square seal "Dōsū" is impressed below his signature here. The name is particularly important historically, since it is known that he adopted it in 1704,<sup>2</sup> and dates the drawing to the last dozen years of his life.

1. Some of the Chinese historical materials on the life of Hotei are translated by Helen B. Chapin, "The Ch'an Master Pu-tai," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 53 (1933), pp. 47–52.
2. Tanaka Ichimatsu, ed., *Kōrin (The Art of Kōrin)* (Tokyo, 1965), p. 27.

## Plum Tree and Hollyhocks

Edo period

Ogata Kenzan (1663–1743)

Pair of six-fold screens; color on gilded paper

Each screen, W. 286 x H. 110.8 cm (112 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 43 $\frac{11}{16}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: right screen, “Kyōchō Sanjin Shisui

Shinsei, eighty-one years old”; left screen, “Karaku

Itsumin Shisui Shinsei, eighty-one years old [1743]”

SEAL: “Reikai” on both screens

EX COLLECTIONS: Setsu Inosuke, Kamakura; Prince Komatsu

PUBLISHED: Harold P. Stern, *Rimpa: Masterworks of the Japanese Decorative School* (New York, 1971), no. 30; Nakamura Tanio, “Kenzan’s Screens of Red Plums and Hollyhocks,” *Kobijutsu* 16 (January 1967), pp. 86–88; Tokugawa Museum, *Rimpa Meihin-ten* (Nagoya, 1966), no pl. no.; Sherman Lee, *Japanese Decorative Style* (Cleveland, 1961), pls. 82, 83.

Ogata Kenzan, Kōrin’s younger brother, is often described as the antithesis of Kōrin (see nos. 54, 55). In contrast to Kōrin’s extroverted, ebullient personality, Kenzan is said to have been a quiet, scholarly person, who liked to read and study Zen. This aspect of Kenzan’s personality is succinctly expressed in the name “Shinsei,” meaning “to reflect deeply on oneself,” which he adopted shortly after 1687 and continued to use throughout his life. Kenzan, like Kōrin, spent his youth as an affluent, educated gentleman, receiving instruction on various arts. He is believed to have studied painting with Kanō Yasunobu (1613–1685), and the tea ceremony and Zen with leading masters. Kenzan became an excellent calligrapher, emulating the style of Chang Chi-chih (1186–1263) of Southern Sung China. However, it was his interest and experience in pottery-making that was later to help establish his professional career.

Two years after the death of his father, Sōken, in 1687, Kenzan retired to a small studio, which he named Shūseidō (“a hut to study quietly”) across the street from Nin’naji in Kyoto. This move may have been

prompted by the proximity of the greatest potter of that time, Nonomura Ninsei, who operated his successful kiln in the same neighborhood. The failure of their family’s textile business forced the Ogata brothers to seek new careers. In 1699, Kenzan opened a kiln at Narutaki, a large estate in the northwest suburb of Kyoto, which was given to him by Nijō Tsunahiro, an aristocratic patron of his father. He adopted a new name, “Kenzan” (“Northwest Mountain”), after the location of this kiln and became a professional potter, collaborating with Kōrin, who painted his wares. At times, Kenzan wrote colophons in his clear, squarish style alongside Kōrin’s paintings. Their work together came to a gradual close after 1701, when Kōrin was granted the title of Hokkyō. Some believe that Watanabe Shikō (1683–1755), a teenaged pupil of Kōrin, helped Kenzan at Narutaki after Kōrin’s disengagement from the kiln.

The influence of Kōrin’s paintings and designs on Kenzan’s work persisted throughout his career, and it is especially noticeable in his ravishingly prismatic designs. Kenzan worked at Narutaki for more than ten years, but moved back to Kyoto in 1712, where he opened another kiln and produced many dinner wares. Scholars are still baffled by his sudden decision to abandon this kiln and move to Edo in 1731, when he was sixty-nine. At any rate, he opened another kiln there with the backing of Prince Kōkan (1697–1738), an influential aristocratic Tendai monk. While in Edo, in 1737, Kenzan traveled north to Sano in Tochigi prefecture at the invitation of his admirers in that region. At Sano he is known to have made potteries for a short period of time, which are commonly known as “Sano Kenzan.”<sup>1</sup>

Kenzan’s reputation in Edo was not limited to pottery; he seems to have been highly regarded as a painter as well. In fact, most of Kenzan’s paintings are dated to his Edo period. On many paintings, even on small plates and dishes, Kenzan frequently wrote poems in his supple calligraphic style, quoting either from Chinese or Japanese anthologies. In these works, which beautifully combine painting and calligraphy, Kenzan revitalized the aesthetic ideals of the Fujiwara court artists







and of Hon'ami Kōetsu, who aspired to a perfect harmony between the arts of literature and calligraphy.

The screens here are rare among Kenzan's paintings, because they have no literary allusions. They were copied from Kōrin's pair of small two-fold screens, now in the Hinohara collection. One of this set by Kōrin shows a pair of peacocks under a plum tree; the other, a group of hollyhocks. Kenzan's brilliant designs in the Burke collection are even more decorative than Kōrin's originals. On the right screen, Kenzan depicted spring flowers of camellias and plums, eliminating from them the birds that appear on Kōrin's composition. On the left screen, he spread hollyhocks over the entire surface, introducing an additional group of flowers at the upper left. The background of the screens has been left completely neutral, except for the low-lying hill on the right screen. Sharp bare branches of old plum trees shoot out into the golden sky, their spiky quality intensified by the clash of diagonals and verticals. The composition is rigidly two-dimensional; the flowers are turned to frontal positions. Yet, when the screens are made to stand in zigzag formation, as they were originally intended to be, the flowers and plants come alive in the effect of flickering and shifting light reflected against the shining gold background. The color scheme is equally simple. Plum blossoms are painted in light pink, tiny buds in bright red, and some camellias in

white. The same color scheme is repeated on the large blossoms of hollyhocks on the left-side screen. A large trunk and thin branches of the plum tree are both painted first in ink, then bright green is added, often in the *tarashikomi* technique of painting over wash.

Kenzan put his signature, impressed his seal, and gave his age, eighty-one, on both screens. The screens were made in 1743, only a few months before his death. His advanced age probably accounts for the rigidity of the plum branches and hollyhock plants. Kenzan's signatures also reflect his personal view of a life away from home. He seems to have regarded his move to Edo as a self-imposed exile, as he called himself "Kyōchō Sanjin" ("a vagabond from Kyoto"), and "Karaku Itsumin" ("a recluse from Kyoto"), perhaps with a hint of nostalgia and self-mockery. These screens formerly belonged to the collection of Prince Komatsu, a close confidant of Emperor Meiji, who was also closely related to Prince Kōkan. Sakai Hōitsu (1761–1828), a great admirer of Kōrin's work, published, in 1823, a catalogue of Kenzan's work, the *Kenzan Iboku*, in which he reproduced these screens in woodblock prints.

1. For a detailed but somewhat biased study of Kenzan's pottery work, see Barnard Leach, *Kenzan and His Tradition* (London, 1966).

## *Genji Monogatari Emaki*

Edo period

Painting, attributed to Kaihō Yūsetsu (1598–1677)

Calligraphy of the text, attributed to twenty-seven noblemen-calligraphers

Two handscrolls, twenty-seven scenes and twenty-seven texts in each scroll; color on paper

H. 23.7 cm (9<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

The *Genji Monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*) is probably the best-known Japanese literary work in the West, thanks to the equally celebrated English translation by Arthur Waley.<sup>1</sup> The novel, regarded by many as the first true novel of the world, contains fifty-four chapters that describe the numerous romances of Prince Genji, a man of high birth, great beauty, and intellect—the epitome of male virtues. He was, above all, a compassionate lover of beauty—of women and

of nature. The first forty chapters of this monumental novel are devoted to his life and amorous adventures. The remaining chapters focus on the less spectacular achievements of Kaoru, Genji's son, and Niou, Genji's grandson.

The author of this novel, Murasaki Shikibu, or Lady Murasaki, as she is known to Western readers, was born around 978 to a minor branch of the august Fujiwara family; she married a kinsman of modest rank, who was many years her senior. Widowed in 1001, she was sent to serve as lady-in-waiting to Empress Akiko (d. 1074), whose austere court Waley compares to that of Queen Victoria.<sup>2</sup> It is not known exactly when she began her long novel, but the work must have been in progress or possibly even finished by 1008. In that year she mentions in her diary that she was greeted at the court as “Waka Murasaki” (“young Murasaki”), referring to the name of one of her heroines.<sup>3</sup> The novel is believed to have been at least partly modeled after the life of Fujiwara Michinaga (966–1027), the most powerful



patriarch of the Fujiwara clan. It offers far more than a mere account of love entanglements; through her descriptive details Lady Murasaki sheds light on the social mores of her time as well as contemporary Japanese sensitivity to colors, shapes, and fragrances.

The illustration of fiction and poetry was already an established tradition before the novel was written. Illustrated versions of an early tenth-century romantic novel, the *Tale of Sumiyoshi*, are known to have existed as early as 972 (see no. 21). A number of illustrated novels are mentioned in the *Tale of Genji*; in addition to the *Tale of Sumiyoshi*, the *Ise Monogatari*, *Utsubo Monogatari*, and *Taketori Monogatari* are the best known. The *Tale of Genji*, written almost one hundred years after the *Tale of Sumiyoshi*, may well have been illustrated shortly after its completion. Later novels, which tried to emulate the enormously successful *Genji*, often mention that young women patiently copied this book for their own possessions; some of these were no doubt accompanied by illustrations. Unfortunately, however, the earliest literary reference to the *Genji* pictures appears only in 1119, almost one hundred years after Murasaki's death. In that year, according to his diary, the *Chōshū Ki*, Minamoto Moro-

toki (1077–1136) was ordered by the cloistered emperor Shirakawa and his consort to procure paper on which to copy the tale and have pictures made for it.<sup>4</sup> The status of the patron of this version has led some scholars to believe that the famous scrolls now divided between the Tokugawa and Gotō Museums are fragments from the set. Although the actual relationship between the extant scrolls and those ordered in 1119 cannot be verified, the former are indeed dated stylistically to the first half of the twelfth century. Just as the tale is considered the height of Fujiwara literature, the nineteen fragments in the Tokugawa and Gotō Museums are regarded as some of the best examples of narrative illustrations of Japan. In his careful analysis of nineteen pictures, Akiyama Terukazu estimates that the original scrolls contained about two or three scenes per chapter, constituting a large set of about ten scrolls.<sup>5</sup> This means that we now have only a small fraction of what was once an enormous series, in a scope quite befitting their literary source. Akiyama's estimate may, in fact, be modest, since the pictures were painted at the time another large series of the *Genji* pictures was made in a set of twenty scrolls.<sup>6</sup> No other set of pictures of this tale is known before the



late Kamakura period, and even these examples—only a few fragments of ink drawings—are scarce.

The tale remained the most popular subject of narrative painting through the Muromachi period, and its iconography and pictorial compositions seem to have been firmly codified before the fifteenth century. From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, a drastically simplified text and a much smaller cycle of illustrations developed as the standard format. A set of two scrolls of *Genji* pictures is mentioned in a fifteenth-century diary, the *Kam'mon Gyoki*.<sup>7</sup> Such illustrated versions of *Genji Monogatari* with small narrative cycles were composed in later periods in increasingly larger numbers.

A manual for an illustrated *Genji Monogatari*, recently discovered by Tamagami Takuya and acquired by the Osaka College for Women, and another similar handbook in the Imperial collection, provide interesting information on the lost *Genji* illustrations.<sup>8</sup> The Osaka manual, entitled *Genji Monogatari E-kotoba* is dated to the sixteenth century and is considered the earliest of such manuals. Every chapter in this book, except chapter 10 (“Sakaki”), which is missing, is represented by two to seven brief sections of the text (more than two hundred altogether) accompanied by a short scenariolike directive that specifies the iconographic program for a painted composition. It is a compendium that was obviously based on earlier complete versions of illustrated *Genji Monogatari*, which are dated not earlier than the fifteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Each section of the textual excerpt is drastically condensed, but the commentaries provide full descriptions of the pictorial scenes, the requirements for the cast of characters, their actions, and the seasonal attributes. Iconographic details specified in these directives but not included in the textual excerpts represent specific information gleaned from passages found at random throughout the long novel. Sometime before the late Muromachi period, these items had been brought together and codified to form a standard iconographic program, which served as the archetype of later *Genji* illustrations.

The *E-kotoba* and other model books like it must have served as convenient guides to later painters and calligraphers who could select their favorite episodes, while producing an illustrated *Tale of Genji* that conformed faithfully with the earlier works.

The four versions of *Genji* pictures in this cata-

logue—nos. 57–59 and no. 51, the screen by Sōtatsu—were selected from a large group in the Burke collection. The group of these *Genji* pictures is typical in many ways of the illustrations made in the post-Muromachi period. They are painted on three different formats, each one in popular use: screen, album, and scroll. The *emaki* here is particularly important, since it includes both text and pictures for the entire book of fifty-four chapters, evenly divided between two scrolls. This arrangement was quite popular among late versions of the *Genji*, and it was also used in the pair of six-fold screens, no. 58. In these examples, each chapter is represented by one scene. Tosa Mitsunori, who painted the two delicate books of ink drawings (no. 59), deviated occasionally from this rule by painting the chapters on sixty small album leaves.

A manual like the Osaka *E-kotoba* includes a wide choice of episodes for every chapter, so one might expect to find a comparable range of illustrations. A surprising majority of works from the post-Muromachi period follow a standard cycle of fifty-four scenes, however, and the selection of individual episodes representing the chapters is seldom varied.<sup>10</sup> Variants can usually be traced to the *E-kotoba* or other manuals.

The text in the *Genji* scrolls of the Fujiwara period, written in beautiful *kana* script, is the oldest record of the novel, but it is a very much abridged edition. The drastically condensed text was more than compensated for by a large number of illustrations, which evoke the novel's subtle mood and pathos. The passages of the text quoted in the post-Muromachi period versions of the *Genji Monogatari* are even more terse than the twelfth-century text. As the pictorial cycle became smaller, many screens depicted only a few vignettes, as a brief reference to the entire novel. The paintings also tend to be visually descriptive rather than evocative, evidently to satisfy the aesthetics of a popular audience, whose knowledge of the *Tale of Genji* went no deeper than the mere outline of the plot.

Each of the two scrolls here has a frontispiece. The first has large pine trees, and the second, a plum tree; both designs are painted in gold and silver on light blue paper. On the brocade covers are small, pink-colored paper strips bearing the title “Tsuru Bune” (“Fishing Boats”), in reference to a poem by the nobleman-priest Jien (1155–1225), which is quoted on a paper accompanying the scrolls. This poem is included in the anthology of Jien's poems, the *Shugyoku Shū*,<sup>11</sup> but its

exact relationship to these *Genji* scrolls is not clear. The poem reads:

When I rest my writing brush to look out to the  
beautiful scenery outside,  
I see covered fishing boats at the Bay of Ejima on  
the Awaji Island.

The poem, as well as the title of the scrolls, was written by an anonymous calligrapher, who also wrote a document in which he named the twenty-seven calligraphers of the scrolls. The names of the calligraphers are listed for the chapter headings, one calligrapher for each of the first twenty-seven chapters, and their names are repeated in the same sequence, in most instances, for the second group. For example, the first chapter and the twenty-eighth chapter are attributed to the former Kampaku ("Regent") Takasu. It is not known when and by whom this attribution was made. The calligraphers are identified by their family names and ranks, without their personal names. Since their high ranks were usually hereditary, identification of individual calligraphers is difficult.

The scenes reproduced here illustrate chapters 5 and 39. Chapter 5 (p. 190), "Waka Murasaki" ("Young Murasaki," or "Murasaki" in Waley's translation), describes the meeting between Genji and the young girl Murasaki when she was about ten.<sup>12</sup> Genji had taken an overnight trip to a mountain temple, where he noticed young Murasaki, who was being raised by the abbot, her grand uncle. On the beautiful spring morning when Genji was to return home, his friends and retainers came to fetch him. Together they stopped for a moment to enjoy the view of beautiful cherry blossoms, "whereupon," as the text preceding this picture reads,

they all sat down in a row upon the moss under a tall rock and passed a rough earthenware wine-jar from hand to hand. Close by them the stream leaped over the rocks in a magnificent cascade. To no Chujo pulled out a flute from the folds of his dress and played a few trills upon it. Sachu Ben, tapping idly with his fan, began to sing "The Temple of Toyora". . . .<sup>13</sup>

The painting includes a few details not found in the quotation. A zither is shown before the figure of Genji, for example, and a retainer at the right plays a mouth-organ. The directive in the Osaka *E-kotoba* that accompanies this excerpt, supplies the pictorial motifs:

"Tō no Chūjō plays the flute, Sachū Ben sings while keeping rhythm with his fan, the attendants play the mouth-organ and reed pipe. A carpet should be spread out on the rock, and the priest produces the zither and asks Genji to play it . . ." <sup>14</sup> This directive corresponds almost exactly with a passage in the original tale that immediately follows the section of the text quoted in the Burke scroll: "[Genji sat against the rock, and] one of his attendants now performed upon the reed pipe . . . . Presently the old priest came out of his house carrying a zithern, putting it into Genji's hands [he] begged him to play something . . ." <sup>15</sup>

An episode from chapter 39 ("Yūgiri") (see p. 191) describes Yūgiri's love for the reluctant Lady Ochiba, the widow of Kashiwagi. On a crisp autumn day, in the middle of September, Yūgiri visits Ochiba's country home in Ono. The passage reads,

. . . Close under the fence a group of deer was sheltering from the blasts of the storm, their hoofs pressing the brown rice-stalks; nor did even the harsh tones of the bird-clapper drive them from their refuge. They stood together, crying with a pitiful air . . . .<sup>16</sup>

Under the crimson setting sun, stalks of rice bend with heavy ripe grain. Deer approach the foot of the fence, and Yūgiri stands at the door trying to shield his face behind his open fan, so that Ochiba will not see him. The text quoted in this scroll makes no mention of the protagonist, but the *E-kotoba* prescribes the scene. Yūgiri's visit at Ono must show him holding his fan open, looking toward the rice field, while deer and autumn bellflowers grace the garden.

With the exception of chapter 45 ("The Bridge Maiden"), the two scrolls were painted by one master. The artist who painted the forty-fifth scene was probably a young assistant, since his handling of the brush is much less convincing than that of the master. On the remaining fifty-three scenes, colors are applied lightly; occasional touches of gold and silver are added in a restrained manner. Light, fluid ink lines define the forms, but the darker ink is often applied in a free, painterly manner on the rocks and pebbles that dot the streams and undulating shorelines. Elegant autumn grasses are often included in the garden scenes, as in this vignette from the "Yūgiri" chapter; hedges are painted in light brown washes over the ink lines. These features mark the paintings of Kaihō Yūsetsu, son of the great



Momoyama-period master, Kaihō Yūshō (1533–1615). Yūsetsu, an artist almost forgotten today, has been known primarily for the portrait he painted of his parents.<sup>17</sup> However, new information about his career has emerged in the course of studying the work of painters who operated *e-ya* (“picture shops”). Such shops produced and sold ready-made pictures.<sup>18</sup> Yūsetsu, who lost his father when he was seventeen, apparently operated such *e-ya*. He seems to have considered his position too degrading for the name of his respectable warrior family, so he called himself either “E-ya Chūzaemon” or “Kotani Chūzaemon.” After the year 1628, he is mentioned under these names in a courtier’s diary, the *Tokiyoshi-kyō Ki*.<sup>19</sup> He was probably introduced to court by his father’s contact with such noblemen as Prince Tomohito, known for his palace, Katsura. Through the concerned intervention of Lady Kasuga (1579–1643), who had been reared by Yūshō and his wife and was the wet-nurse of Iemitsu (1605–1651), the third Tokugawa shogun, Yūsetsu obtained some commissions from Iemitsu. The exact date of this turn in his fortune is not known, but it must have been before 1638, since in that year he is mentioned again in the *Tokiyoshi-kyō Ki*, this time as Kaihō Yūsetsu.<sup>20</sup> Also through Lady Kasuga, Yūsetsu came into contact with Kanō artists and collaborated with such important members of this august family as Tan’yū (1602–1674), whom he helped to decorate the walls of the Imperial Palace in 1655 and 1662, and Kanō Yasunobu (1613–1685), in 1674.<sup>21</sup> Yūsetsu’s paintings, which echo only faintly his father’s powerful forms of ink-play, present a pleasant mixture of Kanō and Tosa features. Apparently, his background as an *e-ya* artist greatly enriched his repertory. Among his best-known works is a set of twenty scrolls illustrating the *Tsurezure-gusa* (*The Essays in Idleness*) by a fourteenth-century essayist, Yoshida Kenkō (1283–1350).<sup>22</sup> He is also known to have painted *Genji* pictures on screens and albums.<sup>23</sup>

Since Yūsetsu was humiliated by the misfortunes of his youth, he may not have signed paintings when he was known merely as E-ya Chūzaemon. The set of *Genji* scrolls here which has no signature, may date from Yūsetsu’s youthful period. He often painted for courtiers, and the Burke set is probably one of the works commissioned by a nobleman. The document that names the twenty-seven courtier-calligraphers for the textual excerpts may then be factual.

1. Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York, 1960).
2. *Ibid.*, p. xvi.
3. *Makura no Sōshi, Murasaki Shikibu Nikki*, Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei, vol. XIX, ed. Ikeda Kikan et al. (Tokyo, 1958), p. 470.
4. In the entry for the twenty-seventh day, eleventh month, the second year of the Gen’ei era. For other possible interpretations of the passage in this entry, see also Komatsu Shigemi, “A Statement Concerning the Illustrated Genji Scrolls Found in the *Chōshū Ki*,” *Museum* 105 (December 1959) p. 21.
5. Akiyama Terukazu, *Genji Monogatari Emaki*, Nihon Emakimono Zenshū, vol. I, ed. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al. (Tokyo, 1958).
6. Inaga Keiji, “Genji Higi Shō,” *Kokugo to Koku Bungaku* 483 (June 1964), pp. 22–31; Teramoto Naohiko, “Genji-e Chinjō Kō, I,” *Kokugo to Koku Bungaku* 486 (September 1964), pp. 26–44; Teramoto Naohiko, “Genji-e Chinjō Kō, II,” *Kokugo to Koku Bungaku* 488 (November 1964), pp. 24–38.
7. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai, ed., *Kam’mon Gyoki* (Tokyo, 1944), in the entry for the ninth day of the fifth month, the seventh year of the Eikyō era.
8. Reprint of this manual is in Osaka Joshi Daigaku Koku Bungaku-ka, ed., *Joshi Dai Bungaku* 19 (Osaka, 1967).
9. Akiyama Terukazu, *Heian Jidai Sezoku-ga no Kenkyū* (*Secular Painting in Early Mediaeval Japan*) (Tokyo, 1964), p. 274.
10. Shimizu Yoshiko, “Genji Monogatari Kaiga no Ichi Hōhō,” *Kokugo Kokubun* 309 (May 1960), pp. 1–2.
11. Taya Munehaya, ed., *Jien Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1945), p. 159, poem no. 1515.
12. Waley, *Tale of Genji*, pp. 81–108.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
14. Osaka Joshi Daigaku, *Joshi Dai*, p. 32.
15. Waley, *Tale of Genji*, pp. 91–92.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 715.
17. This portrait painting, however, is considered to be a copy made by Yūchiku, Yūsetsu’s son, from Yūsetsu’s original. See Doi Tsuguyoshi, “On a Portrait of Kaihō Yūshō and his Wife,” *Kokka* 673 (April 1948), pp. 100–103.
18. Yamane Yūzō, “E-ya, Painter’s Shop,” *Bijutsu Shi* 48 (March 1963), pp. 107–117.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 110–112.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
21. Fujioka Michio, *Kyoto Gosho* (*Kyoto Imperial Palace*) (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 203, 213, 221, 222.
22. Miya Tsugio, “Illustrated Scrolls of *Tsurezure-gusa* by Kaihō Yūsetsu,” *Kobijutsu* 40 (March 1973), pp. 109–111.
23. Yamane, “E-ya,” p. 113.



# Genji Monogatari

Edo period (late seventeenth century)  
 A Kanō master  
 Pair of six-fold screens; color and gold on paper  
 Each screen, W. 379 x H. 170 cm (149¼ x 66⅞ in.)

Like no. 57, this pair of six-fold screens includes all fifty-four scenes of the novel *Genji Monogatari*—one scene per chapter, twenty-seven to each screen. Episodes begin at the top right-hand corner of the right screen, and proceed from top to bottom on the first panel (counting from right to left), then from the top of the second panel moving downward, and so forth. The composition was conceived as a continuous panorama, with mountains and hills serving as natural dividers between scenes. A large body of water is depicted in the foreground, while distant seas and rivers appear near the top. Many episodes take place indoors, visible because the roofs of houses have been eliminated in the traditional *fukinuke-yatai* technique. The scene reproduced in color (p. 199) is from the top of the second panel on the right-side screen. It illustrates chapter 5 (“Waka Murasaki”), but the composition differs from that of the same chapter in no. 57. It represents an episode preceding the musical party depicted in the scroll, in which Genji happens to glimpse the young girl Murasaki through a break in a hedge.<sup>1</sup> Other scenes on this pair of screens are very similar to those in the scrolls. Variations in composition can be traced to the artist’s choice of one among several scenes prescribed by a manual such as the *E-kotoba* in Osaka (see no. 57).

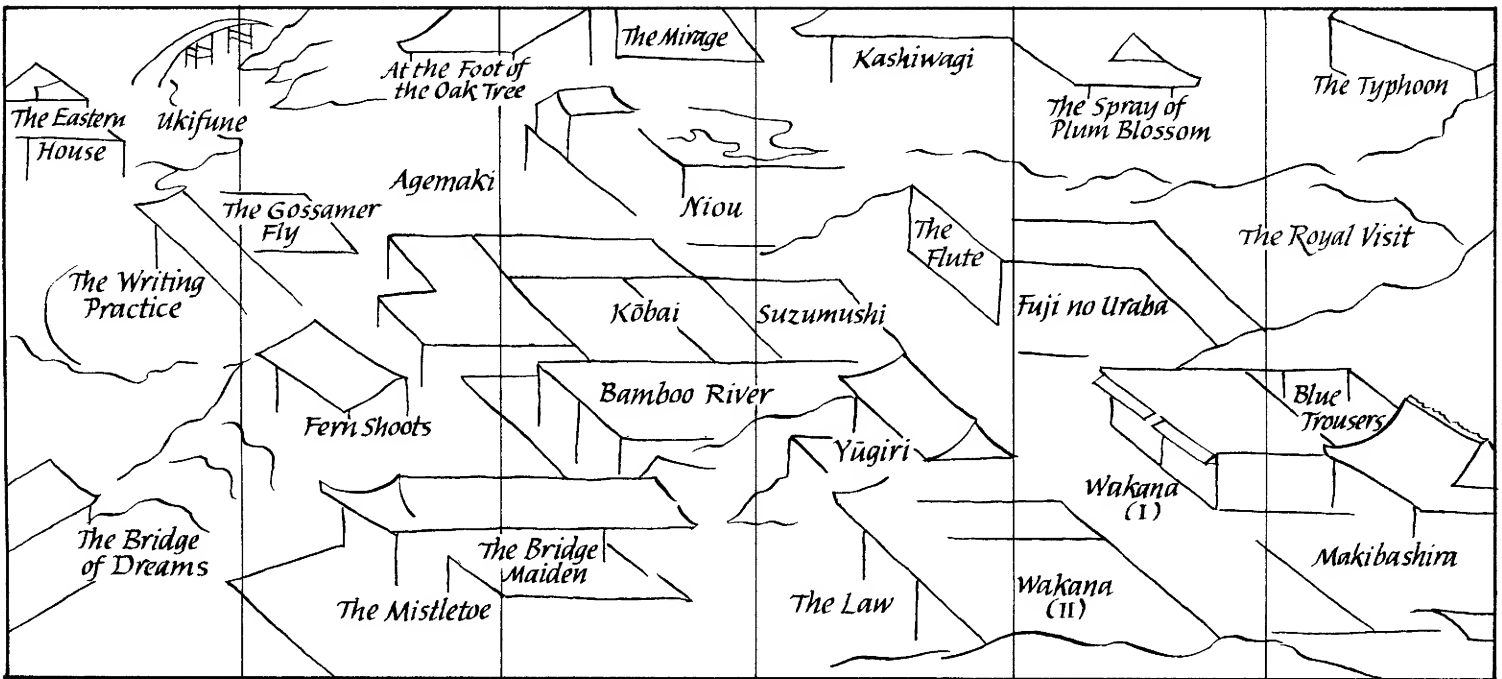
In the detail, reproduced from the left screen (p. 198), are, clockwise: a procession scene (chapter 42; Waley, “Niou,” pp. 756–757), when Yūgiri invited young princes to his home after a banquet was given in honor of the mounted archers. Directly below this scene is a poignant episode from chapter 38 (“Suzumushi”), which is omitted from Waley’s translation. In a small room are Genji, who plays a *koto* (a thirteen-stringed, zitherlike instrument) in a pensive mood, and his young wife Nyosan, who momentarily turns from her prayers for her deceased lover, Kashiwagi. The scene at the bottom of the illustration is one of the most

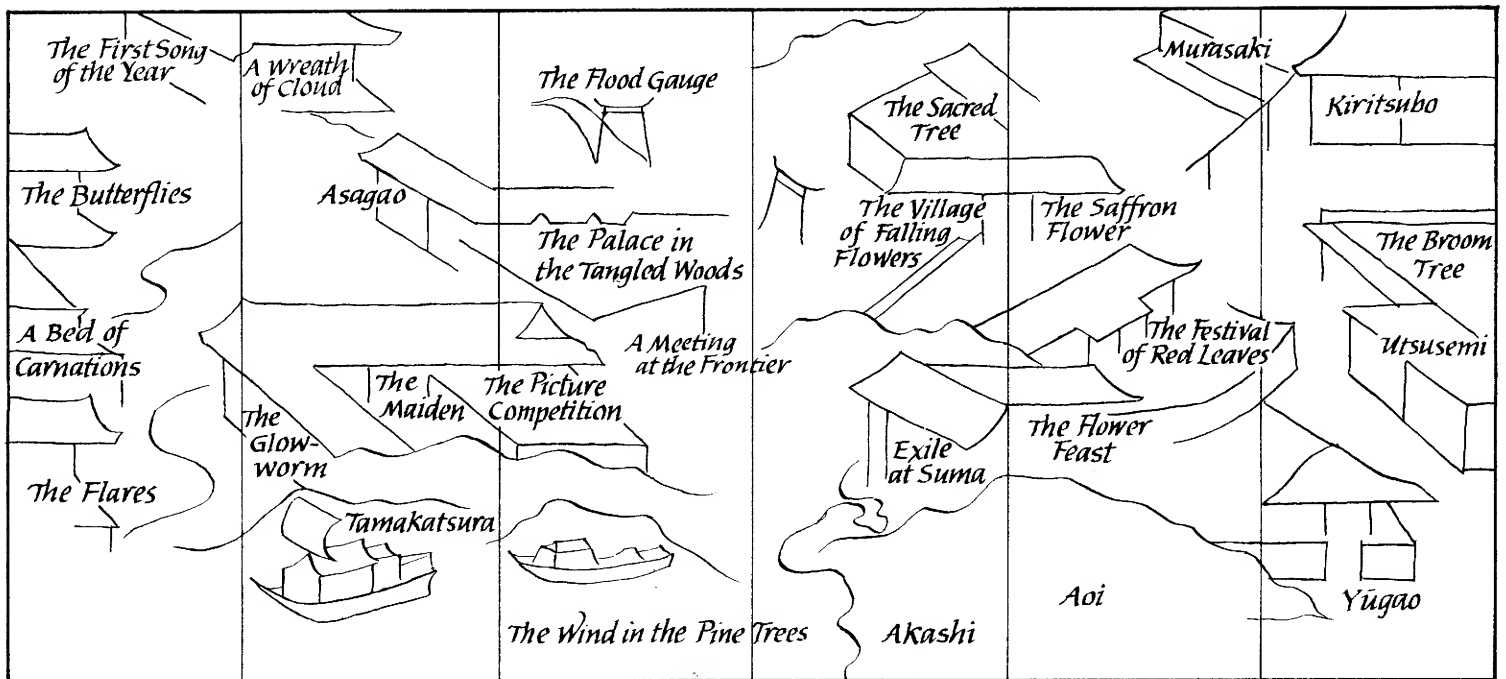
frequently repeated vignettes in the *Tale of Genji*: a suitor catches a glimpse of his love through a crack in the wall, fence, or through curtains. In this illustration of chapter 44 (Waley, “Bamboo River,” p. 775), Yūgiri’s son Kurōdo no Shōshō, who pursues a young princess, is “dumbfounded at his good fortune” to be able to take a good look at his love as she and other girls play the game of draughts very near the window, unaware of his prying. The scenes in two adjoining rooms directly above this amusing one are derived from chapter 43 (Waley, “Kobai,” p. 762), where General Kōbai (“Red Plum”) entrusts a small boy with his letter addressed to Prince Niou, inviting him to come and see his beautiful daughter, who is seated in the adjoining room playing a zither. A large red plum tree in the garden almost touches the general, who bears its name.

Countless *Genji* pictures have been preserved from the Momoyama and later periods, the majority of them having been indiscriminately attributed to Tosa artists. This is true even in such sources otherwise reliable as the *Kōko Gafu*, a late nineteenth-century catalogue of paintings.<sup>2</sup> However, evidence suggests that many Kanō artists, including Eitoku (1543–1590) and Sanraku (1559–1635) also painted this tale, although it is the antithesis of the ideals represented by this school. The pair of screens in the Burke collection is an example of *Genji* pictures painted by a Kanō master. Miniature screens for room interiors, almost all of them landscape scenes, are executed in monochrome ink in a simplified, yet unmistakable, academic Kanō style. Multistoried pagodas are perched on hills; extremely dark, wet ink is applied in the “boneless” manner, recalling the works of late seventeenth-century masters like Kanō Yasunobu (1613–1685) and his nephew, Tsunenobu (1636–1713). The unidentified master of these screens was assisted by a second painter, who executed the five scenes on the upper parts of the left screen illustrating chapters 28, 29, 32, 36, and 41. The second artist painted smaller figures with more rigid brushstrokes and heavier layers of colors.

1. Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York, 1960), p. 84.

2. Kurokawa Mayori, ed., *Kōko Gafu*, I, pp. 145–148. The most popular edition of this book is in *Kurokawa Mayori Zenshū*, I, II (Tokyo, 1910–1911).







*Detail, middle of third and fourth panels, left screen*





*Detail, top of second panel from right, right screen*

*Genji Monogatari*

Edo period

Tosa Mitsunori (1583–1638)

Two albums, thirty leaves in each; ink with red and gold on paper

Each leaf, H. 13.4 x W. 12.9 cm (5¼ x 5⅛ in.)

SEAL: "Tosa Mitsunori"

Sixty leaves of drawings illustrating the fifty-four chapters of the *Tale of Genji* (see nos. 57, 58) are pasted on and evenly distributed among these two books. There is no text. The standard rule of representing one chapter by one composition has been ignored in some cases here. The identification of individual scenes is difficult, since a recent remounting has disturbed the sequence of album leaves pasted in the books, and since the compositions often deviate from standard formulae. Identification often depends on minor motifs, such as flowers or birds. Album leaves are executed primarily in ink, with tiny red spots for the lips of both men and women, and occasionally on the sun, curtains, or the flames of fire; gold is used on fluffy clouds and occasionally on decorative details.

One of the leaves, reproduced opposite, illustrates another episode from chapter 38 ("Suzumushi"), seen also in no. 58, a pathetic story of Nyosan's betrayal of Genji. Nyosan, daughter of an emperor and the legitimate wife of Genji, has decided to enter a nunnery, repenting her tragic love affair with Kashiwagi. On a warm summer day, when lotus flowers are in full bloom in the garden pond, she offers prayers to Buddha. The directive given in the model book, the Osaka *E-kotoba* (see no. 57) stipulates that many white and red lotus flowers should be included in this vignette.<sup>1</sup> In addition, many Buddhist accouterments and sutras should be represented; noblemen and priests must be present; and Genji must be shown viewing the preparation in progress. Although no figure of a nobleman or priest is included in this small composition, there are many ladies-in-waiting; incense burners rest on the floor and small boys walk about. Genji peeks through a curtain

to watch Nyosan, who is seated on a sumptuous dais partly concealed by curtains. Another scene illustrates an episode from chapter 20, "Asagao" (Waley, p. 387), showing four women seated in a room. The scene is identified by morning glories (*asagao*) placed on the floor. On an autumn morning, after Genji has tried, unsuccessfully, to court the Princess Asagao, he sends her a poem with a few sprigs of morning glories. The scene pertains to the following passage in the novel:

... Can it be that the Morning Glory, once seen by me and ever since remembered in its beauty, is now a dry and withered flower? Does it count with you for nothing that I have admired you unrequited, year in and year out, for so great a stretch of time? That at least might be put to my credit . . . .<sup>2</sup>

This episode is the first one in a set of four vignettes prescribed in the *E-kotoba* as a possible choice for illustrators of this chapter.

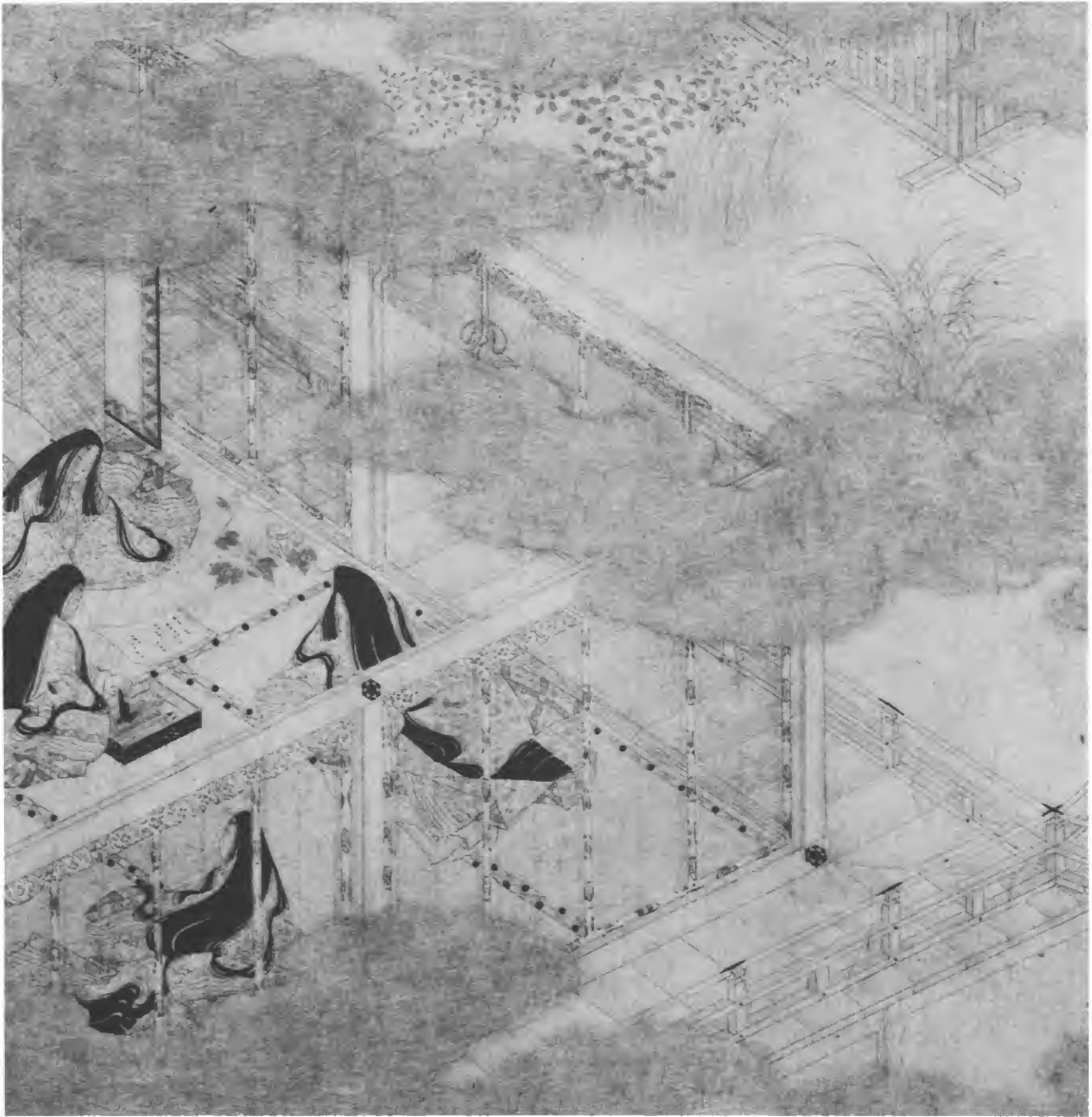
The composition of the "Suzumushi" chapter is one of the most crowded scenes in this book, while the majority of them resemble the scene of the "Asagao" chapter. A few figures of men and/or women are quietly seated in a room, sometimes writing letters or playing musical instruments; rooms are composed like boxes, seen at an angle with roofs "blown off," facing charming gardens which usually include seasonal imagery. Fluffy clouds in soft gold hover over the rooms and gardens, as if to create a barrier—both spacial and temporal—between the painted figures and the viewer. The work resembles that of Sōtatsu (no. 51), but differs markedly from the rational, objective, and descriptive style of the Kanō screen (no. 58). The present work also differs from the scroll attributed to Yūsetsu (no. 57), which depicts rooms from the side, not from above, leading the viewer's eye along a smooth movement from right to left.

A large seal of "Tosa Mitsunori" (W. 2.4 x H. 2.3 cm) was recently exposed to view by cutting a flap in the backing paper of the last leaf. Most likely, the same seal was impressed on each leaf. Tosa Mitsunori, who was either the son or the pupil of Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613), is the father of the famous Mitsuoki (1617–



Chapter 38





## Chapter 20

1691), the artist who restored the Tosa family's fame. The Tosa school, which held its position as the official group of court artists during the Muromachi period, never managed to transform its style to suit the format of the large, impressive screen that was standard for

Momoyama painters. Their lot suffered especially after Mitsumoto, the last official Tosa artist at the court, was killed in 1569 as he fought for the Ashikaga army. The eldest among the surviving Tosa artists, Mitsuyoshi, who is reported to be a younger brother of Mitsumoto,

abandoned Kyoto and moved to Sakai, which was then a bustling port city near Osaka. There he continued to work in the traditional Tosa style. Mitsunori's drawings are clearly indebted in many ways to Mitsuyoshi's works, including his usual habit of impressing seals in black ink on the backs of album leaves. Mitsunori's compositions are even smaller than Mitsuyoshi's, however, probably reflecting the general trend among painters after the late Muromachi period to illustrate courtly tales in miniature style. The albums here are, in fact, even smaller than another set of *Genji* drawings by the same artist, which is now in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Many of the illustrations of romantic novels, particularly of *Genji*, were made as part of the dowries of young women, which may also account for the extreme delicacy of these albums.

The albums in both the Burke collection and the Freer Gallery are executed in a special type of drawing known as *hakubyō* ("white drawing") to distinguish it from a Chinese-inspired, free, dynamic ink brushwork. This technique has a long tradition going back to the Fujiwara period, when this exquisite art form was appreciated for a subtlety not possible in polychrome paintings.<sup>3</sup> Extant works executed in this technique are known only from the Kamakura period, however; it seems to have reached great popularity during the second half of the thirteenth century. Subjects for "white drawings" were usually taken from romantic novels of the Fujiwara period, such as the *Tales of Ise* and the *Tale of Genji*. The technique uses threadlike, straight ink lines to outline delicate forms highlighted by small barely perceptible dots in red. Startlingly, this gossamer beauty is interrupted by large areas of pitch black ink that describe noblemen's tall hats or women's long, wavy hair. Contrasted against the pale delicacy of the background, these black areas of hats and hair create abstract patterns of unexpected beauty.

Mitsunori might have been attempting a revival of this genre in his treatment of these album leaves, but his drawings are not as dramatic as the Kamakura-period works. Mitsunori filled the costumes of men and women with delicate designs, thereby softening the effect of a stark black mass against spidery ink lines. As if he were nearsighted, he has drawn even the smallest details so that they are barely visible to the naked eye. The suggestion has been made that Mitsunori used a magnifying lens to execute his work.<sup>4</sup> Such glasses were quite popular after 1551, when they were introduced to Japan from the West. The city of Sakai was an active port and often set the latest fashion during the time Mitsunori lived there. Sakai, however, could not offer an eternal haven to the dwindling fortune of the Tosa school. In 1633, the government's ban on foreign trade dealt a severe blow to this city, which may have prompted Mitsunori to move back to Kyoto in 1634. His decision was a wise one, since his son, Mitsuoki, eventually regained the family's traditional position as the official artist of the imperial court.

1. Osaka Joshi Daigaku Koku Bungaku-ka, ed., *Joshi Dai Bungaku*, 19 (Osaka, 1967), pp. 197–198.
2. Arthur Waley, trans., *The Tale of Genji* (New York, 1960), p. 387.
3. Shimbō Tōru, *Hakubyō Emaki*, *Nihon no Bijutsu*, 48, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1970).
4. Kobayashi Tadashi, *Tosa Mitsunori E Tekagami* (Kyoto, 1972), p. 21.





P A R T 4     Masters of the Eighteenth and  
Nineteenth Centuries

*Eccentric, Nanga, and Ukiyo-e*



THE GENROKU ERA (1688–1704) of the Edo period, often termed a “golden age” by the Japanese because of its outstanding economic growth, was a turning point in the long history of the Tokugawa regime. The firm establishment of a monetary economy in Japan contributed to the growing prosperity of the urban middle class, which was concentrated in Edo, modern Tokyo. Originally a small fishing village before it was chosen as the Tokugawa headquarters, the city of Edo developed into a bustling metropolis. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, its population was approximately one million, the largest in the world at that time. In addition to the political hegemony it enjoyed as the seat of the Bakufu, the city acquired control over the nation’s commerce, finances, and even learning, which traditionally had been the preserve of Kyoto.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many artists, with the exception of the Kanō painters, continued to gravitate toward the old capital in search of inspiration or comradeship with other artists. Few artists chose it as a permanent base, however. Artists enjoyed great freedom of movement, and their mobility, as well as their sense of fraternity, was unprecedented in Japanese history. A highly developed national network of highways, constructed to facilitate implementation of Bakufu’s policy to keep the feudal lords commuting between Edo and their own fiefs, made travel practicable. In turn, the increased mobility contributed to the decentralization of the cultural autonomy enjoyed by Kyoto, a city already debilitated by the Bakufu’s fiscal policies at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The abandonment of Kyoto by Ogata Kōrin and his younger brother, Kenzan, both of whom went to Edo in search of new patrons, is but one example of the shift of status between the two cities created by new economic realities (see nos. 54–56).

While previously in Japan the arts had been subsidized by the aristocracy or military rulers, this custom was also altered in the changing society of the eighteenth century. The Tokugawa shogunate was occupied by a succession of serious, but curiously bland men of moderation who had no significant artistic vision. The only possible exception might have been the fifth shogun, Tsunayoshi (1646–1709), who had a more than casual interest in temple construction, but who was also notorious for his abnormal passion for dogs, which earned him the name Inu Kubō (“Dog Prince”). Since the central government’s policy toward feudal barons was to keep them insolvent, they were unable to provide large-scale patronage to the arts, and such sponsorship was transferred to a pragmatic and moneyed middle class residing in various urban centers. Middle class patronage, in turn, created an age of mass culture. Since there were few projects for the work of decorating large buildings, sliding-screen paintings



were replaced in popularity by folding screens, and above all, by less expensive hanging scrolls and woodblock prints.

Truly puzzling to the historians of Edo-period art is the sudden, unrelated emergence of the so-called “three eccentrics”—Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800), Soga Shōhaku (1730–1781), and Nagasawa Rosetsu (1754–1799) (see nos. 60–62). The basic foundation for the work of these artists was Muromachi ink painting, yet each tried to break away from traditional bonds. What prompted them into this independent course is not known. No feature of their personal lives suggests a reason for the explosive creative energies of their paintings or for their eccentric behavior. Their antics typically involved a rebellion against authority reminiscent of the insistence on individuality promoted by modern artists; their works are almost “expressionistic” in their defiance of aesthetic conventions and in the choice of bizarre subject matter. Perhaps in a world of divided artistic intent and rigid social stratification, creativity could only be expressed in an unconventional manner.

Many different schools of painters were active in this period—Kanō, Rimpa, Maruyama-Shijō, and others—but Nanga and Ukiyo-e particularly attract our attention because they were the most dynamic. Although Nanga and Ukiyo-e are opposite in their approaches to art, each is representative of important aspects in the history of Japanese art. Nanga is the last product of the centuries-old, recurrent Japanese preoccupation with China. In the Edo period the Nanga movement was tied to the sober Confucianist philosophy of the governing élite. Indeed, many Nanga artists, who gravitated toward Kyoto, approached the literati art and philosophy of China from a background in Confucian studies. Ukiyo-e, on the other hand, which is rooted in the ancient tradition of Japanese genre painting, appealed to the burgeoning middle class in Edo. Ukiyo-e artists unabashedly sought the approval of that segment of society whose common denominator was an enjoyment of momentary pleasures.

## NANGA

The Nanga group attracted the more educated artists and the more conscious innovators of painting. Almost all of the major participants of this movement are represented here. The name Nanga (Southern Painting), or Nanshūga (Southern School Painting) is used interchangeably with Bunjinga (Literati Painting). Neither term is, however, easy to define, and the original Chinese interpretations do not apply to all of the Japanese artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who are grouped under these names.

The concept of Bunjinga (Wen-jen Hua, in Chinese) developed in China as part of the Chinese philosophy of life and art. From ancient times, the Chinese believed that a truly well-educated gentleman should express his views of the

world through poetry, music, calligraphy, and painting. The inner workings of the universe, they thought, are revealed only to the gentleman-philosopher-artist and are denied to the mere craftsman-artist, whose talent was considered nothing more than an ability to capture the outward appearance of nature. "Professional" painters were consequently considered inferior to scholar-painters, who painted only as an avocation for their own enjoyment and for that of their equally learned friends. Bunjinga strictly refers, not to a painting style, but to an artistic approach that encompasses a painter's background, social standing, education, and even his state of mind. Some Edo-period critics understood the principle but considered very unlikely artists like Hon'ami Kōetsu (nos. 48-50) and Sōtatsu (nos. 51-52) to be part of the group, although they had little to do with the original Chinese ideal.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of Nanga, (Nan Hua, in Chinese) comes from a theory developed by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636), a Ming-period critic-painter, who, expanding on the opinions of two fellow artists, Mo Shih-lung and Ch'en Chi-ju, divided the painters of China into two groups, Northern and Southern. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's classification had no relationship to either the geographical division of the country or to the political division between the Northern and Southern Sung dynasties. The two divisions were named in accordance with an analogy to the split in the Zen Buddhist church. There was a Northern branch, which emphasized a step-by-step approach to salvation, and a Southern branch, which advocated enlightenment through an intuitive and spontaneous grasp of the truth. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang scorned the Southern Sung and Ming academy painters who, according to him, painted nature in a manner that was detailed, laborious, and superficial, devoid of the inner truth of the subjects they portrayed. With contempt, he called these painters "Northern." On the other hand, most of the painters he admired were artists of the Northern Sung and Yüan dynasties and the literati. These he called "Southern." Since the literati did not paint to earn a livelihood, they were considered free from the dictates of official taste, and they could be, therefore, more spontaneous and individualistic than artists working under patronage.

The Chinese concept of Nan Hua, or Wen-jen Hua, was virtually unknown to the Japanese until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Once it was introduced, it captured the imagination of many educated and serious-minded painters. Japan at that time seemed particularly congenial for the implantation of this idea. For the preservation of its own feudal system, the Tokugawa government encouraged Confucian studies, especially the Chu Hsi branch, which emphasized strict codes of moral conduct, especially personal fidelity and loyalty. In order to aid Confucian study, a small number of Chinese books were allowed into the country. Among them were treatises on painting, which introduced the Japanese to the concepts of Bunjinga and Nanga. Many Japanese

pioneers of Nanga were also Confucian scholars, but they seem not to have felt any conflict between the ideas of freedom and the Confucian demand for loyalty. Uragami Gyokudō (1745–1820) may have been one who realized this dilemma, since he severed his tie with his master (see nos. 76, 77).

Like their Chinese predecessors, Japanese Nanga artists aimed at educating themselves in all of the arts. They often wrote colophons on their paintings—frequently their own poems. This is in sharp contrast to the ink painters of the Muromachi period, who, except for a small minority, depended on the literary embellishments of the better-educated monk-poets. Most of Japan's Nanga painters were not true literati, however. Many earned their livings by painting; many others served feudal lords. Only a few were fortunate enough to have the financial independence that permitted pursuit of the life of a free gentleman. Most were, in fact, "professionals." Artists like Ike Taiga (1723–1776; nos. 68–72) and Yosa Buson (1716–1783; nos. 73, 74) often painted on commission, producing large screens, a practice scorned by gentleman-artists of the wealthy class like Kuwayama Gyokushū (1746–1799; no. 79). Some of these screens were very decorative and painted on gold, and they would have astonished the Chinese adherents of the literati theory.

Clearly, the Japanese failed to understand the Bunjinga concept, but once again, a new idea helped to turn them toward the outside world. In some cases, Nanga painters were among the avant-garde in their awareness and knowledge, also learning about European art and science. Only a small number of Chinese and European traders were permitted to visit Japan, and they were confined to the port city of Nagasaki in Kyūshū. Japanese artists, who were not allowed to travel abroad, often made long journeys to Nagasaki, where they had direct contact with a small number of foreign traders. The Chinese artists I Hai and Shen Ch'üan of the early eighteenth century were primarily businessmen, who visited Nagasaki only briefly. Except for their contributions to the development of Japanese Nanga, their artistic importance is otherwise slight. Although relationships are still ambiguous, Chinese prelates at Mampukuji, the headquarters of the Ōbaku sect of Zen Buddhism (Huang-po, in Chinese) might have played an important role in helping the Japanese find their way in Nanga. Mampukuji, located in the outskirts of Kyoto, was founded by a Chinese monk, Yin-yüan, in 1659; successive abbots were Chinese monks invited from the mainland.<sup>2</sup> Mampukuji was constructed very much like a Chinese monastery, and its exotic beauty fanned Japanese enthusiasm for things Chinese. Although Japanese artists were not given free access to this temple, some Nanga painters, including Yanagisawa Kien (1704–1758; no. 66), Gion Nankai (1676–1751; no. 64), and Ike Taiga, had contacts with monks of this temple.

Nanga artists formed a closely knit fraternity, and they shared their newly acquired knowledge. Frequent visits were facilitated by the greatly improved

highway system. Since few Chinese paintings were available for study, such visits became important occasions for studying works that eventually became models. More than anything else, however, their guides were Chinese books with printed reproductions of ancient masterpieces. One such group of books, known in Japan as the *Hasshu Gafu*, a collection of eight albums of woodcut pictures, was published in Suchou in south China around 1620 and reissued in Japan in 1671.<sup>3</sup> Another important manual of painting, well known in the West as the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual* (*Chieh-tzu-yüan Hua-chuan*), was first published in China in 1679 and introduced to Japan at the beginning of the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> The new book greatly appealed to the Japanese, since it combined theoretical commentary with reproductions in woodblocks of great Chinese masterpieces. In less than ten years after its introduction in Japan, it all but replaced the *Hasshu Gafu* as the most popular Chinese manual.

The scarcity of good Chinese models and the failure to comprehend the true Nan Hua of China produced an unexpected diversity of styles in Japanese Nanga painting. Other styles of painting were borrowed and incorporated; some of them, like Rimpa, Tosa, and native genre, were totally unrelated to China, while Southern Sung and Ming academic styles were originally considered opposite to the Nan Hua premise. Nan Hua meant something new and different to the Nanga artists, and their commitment to China was sincere and complete. Many preferred to use Chinese-sounding names, either by dropping parts of their names or pronouncing them in different ways. Ike Taiga and Yosa Buson, for example, dropped the “no” (a character meaning “field”) from their names. Some even carried over their zeal into their daily lives, obtaining supplies of water presumably drawn from China’s famous wells to brew their tea.<sup>5</sup>

## UKIYO-E

Ukiyo-e, “pictures of the floating world,” is the aspect of Japanese art most familiar to the Western audience. Woodblock prints are the most popular and best-known form of Ukiyo-e, and are sometimes erroneously considered the only kind of Ukiyo-e. Actually, such prints are inexpensive versions of Ukiyo-e paintings. Most printmakers were primarily painters whose works were made available to a larger audience through the more accessible media of woodblocks.

The word “*ukiyo*” has ancient origins. It originally had strong Buddhist overtones suggesting that life (*yo*) on this earth is wearisome (*uki*), ephemeral, and transitory, unlike the eternal bliss of afterlife promised by Buddha. This rather pessimistic view of the world was altered in the less-sober Edo period. The word “*uki*” was written with a different Chinese character, which means “to float,” and the connotation of Ukiyo-e became that of an injunction to enjoy the ephemeral life while it lasted by plunging into its floating current. Ukiyo-e,

therefore, are the pictures depicting men pursuing the pleasures of life on earth. Money, sex, and the theater were the major preoccupations of artists and patrons of Ukiyo-e.

Ukiyo-e artists also painted more conventional genre themes. Hanabusa Itchō (1652–1724), for example, depended heavily on traditional *yamato-e* subjects, depicting the activities associated with particular months of the year (see no. 89). In fact, Ukiyo-e is the last flowering of the native tradition in the arts which had its origins in *meisho-e* and *tsukinami-e*, the two major subjects of genre painting in the Fujiwara period (see p. 7). In time, the two themes were combined and, toward the end of the Muromachi period, evolved into a mature, comprehensive genre subject known as the Rakuchū-Rakugai (Inside and Outside Kyoto) (see no. 45). The Rakuchū-Rakugai scenes, painted either on large screens or on groups of small folding fans, encompassed major scenic spots of Japan, especially those centered around the capital, and each was associated with activities of a particular season of the year. In the early years of the seventeenth century, the composition of all-encompassing large views were broken into smaller scenes specializing on particular themes: Kabuki theaters on the Shijō embankment in Kyoto, the Kamo horse race in May, the Gion Festival of July, and scenes of the red-lantern districts. During the course of this evolution, attention gradually shifted away from feverish outdoor activities of festivals and races to indoor scenes, which provided a closer look at the women of the pleasure-quarters, or to the theater. The women were depicted in striking costumes, and actors were posed in dramatic actions. Single figures of women on small hanging scrolls, especially works by artists of the Kaigetsudō school, culminate the development of this type of painting. Many inexpensive reproductions in print form followed these paintings (no. 88).

Merchants of the Edo period, who were on the lowest rung of the social ladder, generously administered their new wealth with an unabashed *joie de vivre*. For them, theaters and brothels—where enjoyment was based purely on financial ability—promised an escape from reality and an easy road to happiness. The Kabuki theater, which derived from dance performances by an actress named Okuni at the beginning of the seventeenth century, was transformed to an all-male theater by a government decree of 1629. By the early eighteenth century, it had developed into a highly sophisticated theater art, with the help of great actors and a great playwright, Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1652–1724). Yoshiwara, the red-lantern district of Edo, was located first within the city limits, but was relocated after the great fire of 1657 to the northeastern outskirts of Edo, then known as the reed (*yoshi*)-covered field (*wara*). Visits to these sequestered quarters, accessible at first by river, then by land, often became extended outings (see no. 92).

Most Ukiyo-e artists were men of modest origins and of uncertain training;

an artist like Hosoda Eishi (1756–1815) (no. 92) who came from an élite warrior class, was a rare exception. Yet, the bourgeois clientele for whom Ukiyo-e was intended was far from illiterate, and neither were the artists who catered to their taste and demands. Even this most prosaic of art forms often drew inspiration from literature, both classical and contemporary. Ukiyo-e painters had counterparts in novelists and playwrights, who treated the same subjects illustrated by painters and printmakers. Some artists were versatile in both painting and literature. Ihara Saikaku (1642–1693), published many novels that included his own illustrations in woodcut. Another popular novelist, Santō Kyōden (1761–1816), was a painter of Ukiyo-e before he turned to a full-time career in writing (no. 93). Pictures of the professional women of Yoshiwara were sometimes accompanied by poetic colophons, which were composed and written by famous writers of popular literature (nos. 92, 93). Colophons also included allusions to ancient literature, such as the *Tale of Genji*, or even to religious themes, some of them Zen in origin (no. 95). In these respects, Ukiyo-e represents a rare combination of artistic goals—appeal for the common man and fulfillment of the aesthetic axiom of the ancient Far East: painting is poetry; poetry, a silent painting.

1. This remark is found in the “Kaiji Higen” by Kuwayama Gyokushū, see Sakazaki Shizuka, ed., *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), p. 111.
2. Aschwin Lippe, “Ch'en Hsien, Painter of Lohans,” *Ars Orientalis* V (1963), pp. 255–258.
3. This set consists of: 1) *Wu-yüan T'ang-shih Hua-p'u*; 2) *Liu-yüan T'ang-shih Hua-p'u*; 3) *Ch'i-yüan T'ang-shih Hua-p'u*; 4) *Mei-chu-lan-chü Szu-p'u*; 5) *Mu-pen-hua-niao-p'u*; 6) *Ts'ao-pen-hua Shih-p'u*; 7) *T'ang Chieh-yüan Fang Ku-chin Hua-p'u*; and 8) *Chang Pai-yün Hsüan Ming-kung Shan-p'u*.
4. Mae-Mae Sze, *The Tao of Painting: A Study of the Ritual Disposition of Chinese Painting* (New York, 1956).
5. Tokyo National Museum, ed., *Nihon no Bunjinga* (Tokyo, 1966), p. 179.



## White Plum Blossoms and Moon

Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800)

Hanging scroll; color on silk

H. 140.8 x W. 79.4 cm (55<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.)

Colophon by Itō Jakuchū

SIGNATURE: “Heian Koji Jakuchū Kin Sei”; dated to  
“spring, second month, fifth year of the Hōreki era  
[1755]”

SEALS: “Jokin,” “Tōshi Keiwa,” “Shutsu Shin”i oite  
Hatto no uchi”

PUBLISHED: Tsuji Nobuo, *Jakuchū* (Tokyo, 1974),  
pl. 63.

One patch of white resembles snow.  
Plum blossoms are alone,  
even unknown to spring.

Spring, second month, fifth year of the Hōreki era  
Heian Koji Jakuchū Kin Sei

In the stillness of the moonlit night, an old plum tree is in full bloom. White flowers fill the dark sky, which is pierced by the bent, curved branches of an old gnarled tree. The large full moon is witness to this miraculous burst of life. The painting has a dreamlike quality. The color scheme is simple; the entire background is dark grey, except the full moon, which is unpainted. Tree branches are painted in darker grey ink, with occasional touches of green for the clinging moss and brown for the knobby hollows. Petals are white, and pistils and stamens are yellow.

Itō Jakuchū, the artist of this luxuriant painting, is the eldest of the three so-called “eccentrics” of the Edo period. Jakuchū was less outrageous in his behavior and in the expression of his creative genius than the other two artists, and his reputation as an eccentric seems to have been based on his tendency to combine incompatible elements in his paintings, such as realistically executed natural objects with brilliant colors and decorative abstractions. Jakuchū was the eldest son of a wholesale grocer at the Nishiki-kōji in Kyoto, the bustling section of the old city where vegetable and fish

markets still stand. Much of the information on Jakuchū's later life is found in the *Tō Keiwa Gaki* (*Notes on Paintings by Tō Keiwa*)—Tō Keiwa is a name Jakuchū often used.<sup>1</sup> The essay was written by the priest Taiten (1719–1801) of Shōkokuji, who was then regarded as the greatest monk-poet and who later became Jakuchū's religious mentor. According to Taiten, Jakuchū, as a young man, disliked studies, was not a good calligrapher, and had neither special talent nor any particular avocational interest. In accordance with the Japanese custom of primogeniture, Jakuchū inherited the family trade and continued the business for more than fifteen years after the death of his father in 1738. During this period he seems to have developed an interest in Buddhism, becoming a disciple and friend of Taiten, whose friends included the artists Ike Taiga (1723–1776) and Kimura Kenkadō (1736–1802). His best-known name, Jakuchū, reflects his religious interest, as it means “like emptiness.” His commitment to Buddhism is also apparent in the fact that he received the title of Koji, a religious title given to a lay devotee.

It is not known how and when he developed his interest in painting, but he is sometimes believed to have studied painting first with a minor master of the Kanō school, Ōoka Shunboku (1674–1757), and is known to have used the artistic name of Shunkyō. However, no painting bearing this name has yet been found to endorse this claim. The earliest dated painting by Jakuchū is inscribed with the date of 1752, when he was in his late thirties. Shortly after that year, in 1754, he persuaded his younger brother Hakusai to take over the family business so that he could devote himself to painting. His close friendship with the priest Taiten at Shōkokuji may have helped Jakuchū's study, since there was a large collection of Chinese and Japanese masterpieces at the temple. A number of Jakuchū's paintings are faithful copies of ancient Chinese paintings, revealing his artistic interests and method of study. Tsuji Nobuo has been conducting a systematic investigation of Chinese influence on Jakuchū's paintings.<sup>2</sup> Jakuchū's paintings of flowers and birds, which are often densely packed and two dimensional in composition, bursting with brilliantly contrasting colors, recall this genre as painted by Ming artists of China.



一雨雪相似獨清香不知  
實屬己亥春二月

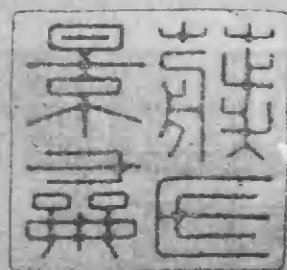
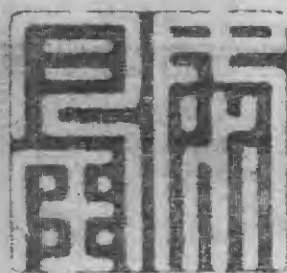
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一白雪相似獨清春不知

寶曆乙亥春二月

平安居士若冲鈞製



Early in his painting career, Jakuchū focused his attention on life around him. He painted humble birds, wildflowers, and shellfish, which had never been treated as respectable themes for the painter. No doubt, his youth in the market place, teeming with life, formed the foundation of his art. During his lifetime, Japanese scholars became more interested in natural science, a study that was inspired by Chinese and European books on botany, zoology, and mineralogy. In such an atmosphere, Jakuchū was inspired to pursue in his painting a work of objective observation of things around him and representation of nature as he saw it. Yet, in his brilliantly colorful works, Jakuchū juxtaposed realistic details against two-dimensional, decorative patterns. The effect is somewhat like that of Ogata Kōrin's decorative paintings; at the same time, it is livelier, with a stronger emotional power not found in the straightforward style of the realists, like Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795). In monochrome paintings of vegetables, and especially in paintings of proud roosters—popular subjects with Americans—Jakuchū achieved a magnificent “expressionistic” effect with dynamic brush lines, often loaded with coal black ink.

Around 1755, Jakuchū launched an ambitious project to paint a set of thirty large hanging scrolls—twenty-seven paintings of flowers, birds, and fishes and three of Buddhist themes. The paintings were donated to Shōkokuji, which, in 1889 presented all but the Buddhist triad to the imperial family. From about 1776, Jakuchū began another large project for Sekihōji, south of Kyoto, of designing five hundred statues of Lohans (Rakan, in Japanese), disciples of Shaka Buddha. In order to finance this project, he painted many simple, quickly executed ink drawings, which he exchanged for a *to* of rice (about four gallons), and called himself Tobei-an (Four-gallon Rice Studio) or Beito-ō (Old Four-gallon Rice Man). In 1788, the great fire of Kyoto left him penniless. Some scholars maintain that after this tragedy he operated a studio where his pupils and assistants produced many paintings, probably in an attempt to recover financial losses.<sup>3</sup> Jakuchū signed some of his latest works with reference to “age of eighty-eight,” hoping that he would live to that ripe old age and referring to his pseudonym, since the Chinese characters for rice consist of three letters for eight, ten, and eight. Unfortunately, his wish was not granted, and he died at eighty-five.

The painting of the plum tree here is dated by Jakuchū's inscription to the second month, 1755, less than a year after he left the family business in order to concentrate on painting. Jakuchū combined a fairly faithful description of the full blossoming flowers with decorative distortion of such details as the strange shapes of hollowed knobs on the trunk and exaggerated curves of tree branches. While ink painters of the Muromachi period like Bokusai (see no. 36) merely suggested the pinnacle of flowers, Jakuchū depicted the blossoms at their zenith, at their most exuberant moment, without philosophical overtones. Bokusai's intention is to distill the scholarly symbolism of purity attached to this flower, while Jakuchū's is to portray its natural energy. His approach recalls some masterpieces of this genre from Yüan and Ming China, such as the paintings by Wang Mien (1335–about 1415) and Ch'en Hsien-chang (1428–1500). At least two more, almost identical paintings of plum blossoms are known, including one in the Imperial collection.<sup>4</sup> The Burke painting is the earliest example, and it must have served as the model for later versions.

1. Tsuji Nobuo, *Jakuchū* (Tokyo, 1974), p. 241.

2. Ibid.

3. Kobayashi Tadashi, “The Works of Jakuchū in His Last Period,” *Kokka* 944 (March 1972), pp. 11–18.

4. Mizuo Hiroshi, “White Plum Blossoms in the Moonlight,” *Kokka* 910 (January 1968), p. 35.



## Lions at the Stone Bridge of Tendai-san

Edo period

Soga Shōhaku (1730–1781)

Hanging scroll; ink on silk

H. 113.9 x W. 50.8 cm (44 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 20 in.)

Colophon by Gazan Nansō (1727–1797), with the date of the eighth year of the An'ei era, the Teigai year (1779)

SIGNATURE: "Soga Shōhaku"

SEAL: "Jasoku-ken Shōhaku"

PUBLISHED: Kobayashi Tadashi, Tsuji Nobuo, and Yamakawa Takeshi, *Jakuchū, Shōhaku, Rosetsu*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikai, vol. XIV (Tokyo, 1973), pl. 84; Tsuji Nobuo, *Kisō no Keifu* (Tokyo, 1970), fig. 25; "Stone Bridge by Shōhaku," *Kokka* 118 (October 1899), p. 193.

The T'ien-t'ai-shan (Tendai-san) is the holy mountain of the T'ien-t'ai sect (Tendai, in Japanese) of Buddhism in Chekiang province, southeast China, and was the legendary abode of three famous Zen eccentrics, Fengkan, Han-shan, and Shih-te (Bukan, Kanzan, and Jitto-ku, in Japanese; see no. 31). The mountain became a favorite pilgrimage site for generations of Chinese and Japanese monks and literary men, who extolled the beauties of the legendary mountain in a number of memorable accounts.<sup>1</sup> The mountain's famous Buddhist monuments and unusual scenery inspired early Chinese masters of landscape painting like Ching Hao (early tenth century) and Ma Yüan (late twelfth century). One of the most impressive sights on the mountain was an extraordinary natural stone bridge, which is described in Chinese literature as rising to a height of 18,000 feet, its fantastic curve likened to a rainbow in the sky or the back of a gigantic turtle. Constantly watered by the mist rising from a waterfall, its stony surface was said to be covered with an extraordinarily slippery layer of ancient moss.

The fame of this bridge spread beyond the borders of China, becoming the subject of fictitious legends abroad. Perhaps the best-known story associated with it for the Japanese public is a Noh play called *Shakkyō*

(*Stone Bridge*),<sup>2</sup> which was written by Kanze Moto-kiyo, also known as Zeami (1363–1443), a brilliant performer and playwright of most of the best-known Noh plays. A second popular legend, of uncertain origin, is illustrated here. A lioness hurls her newborn cubs off a promontory near the high stone bridge to test their endurance. She will care only for those cubs that manage to climb back to her by scaling the steep cliffs. This subject is very rare in the repertory of Chinese and Japanese painters, and the depiction of the scene in this painting is even more bizarre than the story. Hundreds of lion cubs scurry across the painting, leaping from rock to rock, crowding and clawing their way up the top of the cliff, eager to attempt the slippery stone bridge. Some inevitably fail, falling thousands of feet to the churning waters below, while the lioness, a rather gaunt creature, watches the entire drama with an air of passive detachment.

It is expected that the artist of this painting would be a man of odd vision, and Soga Shōhaku was, indeed, a genuine eccentric. Shōhaku often behaved like a wild man, disregarding contemporary concepts of decorum and common sense. From the stories of Shōhaku's outlandish antics, which now have assumed a quality of folklore, we imagine him as a social dropout who knowingly violated the rules of conduct established by a feudal society extremely conscious of propriety. Much-repeated legend has it that he was commissioned to paint screens for a clan lord, at whose palace he spent many days getting drunk but with no work done. Reprimanded, Shōhaku threw black ink, gold, and many other pigments together into a bucket. With a large broom, he scrawled one enormous arch on the golden screens, slapping the rest of the pigment on the face of the lord's pretentious secretary. After Shōhaku left, a gigantic seven-colored rainbow appeared, gleaming against the gold screen. Strangely enough, his eccentric behavior did not alienate him from his public. Not only was he accepted, he was even hailed and applauded, perhaps because his behavior was considered harmless and amusing, but, also, no doubt because he must have appeared as a refreshing personality. By the twentieth century, Shōhaku's popularity had waned in Japan, almost to the point of obscurity, but his



reputation was recently resurrected, thanks largely to Americans, who early appreciated his unorthodox individuality and unexpected modernity. Many of his paintings are in American collections. Through the efforts made in the 1880s by Ernest F. Fenollosa and William S. Bigelow, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, now owns the largest single collection of Shōhaku's paintings.

Facts about Shōhaku's life are confusing, undoubtedly distorted by fictitious embellishments. The identification of his birthplace is still uncertain; some scholars maintain that he was born to a merchant family in Kyoto.<sup>3</sup> He made several trips to the Ise region when he was in his late twenties and early thirties, and Buddhist temples in that area still preserve a number of his paintings. As a young man Shōhaku studied painting with a minor Kanō artist, Takada Keiho (1673–1755), who was a student of Kanō Eikei, a grandson of Kanō Sansetsu (1589–1651). Keiho's works are largely forgotten today, but a mid-nineteenth century dictionary of artists, the *Koga Bikō*, reports that they were strongly individualistic.<sup>4</sup> Most curious about Shōhaku's artistic lineage is his frequent signature using the name Soga Jasoku (also pronounced Dasoku), or Jasoku-ken, claiming himself to be the tenth-generation heir of the ink painter who lived in the fifteenth century. Shōhaku is reported to have used this name because he wanted to revive the glory of Soga Jasoku, but it is unclear why he singled out the Soga school at all. The name Soga Jasoku is well known, primarily as that of the painter of some beautiful screens in Shinju-an, Dai-tokuji in Kyoto. Apparently, he was very popular in the seventeenth century, but his true identity is only now emerging.<sup>5</sup> Kanō Sansetsu occasionally used the name, Jasoku-ken. Curiously, a mid-seventeenth century painter, Soga Nichokuan, also claimed to be the sixth generation descendant from the same artist.<sup>6</sup> Nichokuan's paintings often include fantastic-looking rocks that resemble Shōhaku's.

Shōhaku's self-proclaimed heritage from Soga Jasoku may nevertheless be justified on stylistic grounds. While his subject matter is often bizarre, such as demons and skulls that verge on repulsive grotesqueness, the basic vocabulary of his art remained largely within the tradition of Muromachi ink painting. He was versatile with the brush, using ink as though it were color and relying on the monochromatic medium to give ex-





pression to volume, texture, and mood. His compositions, especially on large screen paintings, also rely on formulae used by artists of the Muromachi period. Pictorial elements concentrated at either end of a screen, with an open space left in the center, give his landscape paintings a structural stability. The unique quality of Shōhaku's painting is sometimes explained as a contrived expression, a deliberate and aggressive attempt to focus attention on himself and away from his successful contemporaries, like Ike Taiga (1723–1776) and Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795). Since some of his legendary antics seem self-consciously artificial, the explanation, cynical as it may sound, may be valid.

The colophon on Shōhaku's *Lions at the Stone Bridge* was composed and written by the monk Gazan Nansō of Tenryūji in Kyoto. It reads:

T'ien-t'ai-shan reaches a height of 48,000 feet.  
These peculiar cliffs are steep with lofty perches  
reaching to the sky.

Stone Bridge is high above the mountains, which  
are for the immortals to climb.

Taoists on cranes can circle up to the bridge,  
But they should wait until the time is right.

Ah, how strange that at the tip of a paint brush an  
immortal can materialize millions of lions.

Above and below they run, moving fiercely on,  
Over the mountains and across the rivers, in intense  
competition.

Among them is a large, old lion with bulging eyes  
as shiny as stars.

The lost ones are gone forever,  
as they fall from the precipices.



Whether or not they come back,  
 it is their fate, and what is there to regret?  
 The painter's technique is beyond my description.  
 My words are superfluous,  
 for the painting will perpetuate the story.

The eighth year of the An'ei era, the Teigai year  
 Gazan Yō-nansō

The date inscribed in the colophon contains some conflicting information. The eighth year of the An'ei era corresponds to 1779, but the cyclical sign, Teigai (the second boar year), falls in 1767, which was not in the An'ei era. The cyclical sign for the eighth year of An'ei, therefore, should read, Kigai (the third boar year). Gazan refers to the peaks of T'ien-t'ai-shan reaching to a height of 48,000 feet, rather than 18,000, which is the more commonly cited figure. Li Po (701–762), one of the great poets of T'ang China, exaggerated the height of the peaks, and Gazan's quotation reflects Li Po's enormous popularity among Japanese literary men.

Since this painting is one of a few dated works from Shōhaku's last period, before his death in 1781, it is valuable as a guidepost in establishing a chronology of his work. Shōhaku's most extreme paintings were largely composed in his youthful period. Paintings like the *Lions at the Stone Bridge* show more restraint; evidently the excesses of his youth were later softened and tamed by an element of humor. The curly tails of the Chinese lions indicate that they are products of the Far Eastern artists' imagination. The rocks are hard, their outlines sharply drawn and the surface described in broadly brushed ink. The crystalline quality of the rocks recalls the works of Kanō Sansetsu, who painted rocks as cubelike, geometric constructions. Sansetsu's landscape paintings, like some of Shōhaku's paintings, also have a peculiar surrealistic quality. Shōhaku may have learned how to achieve this effect from his teacher, Keiho.

1. Many Chinese records on the visit to this mountain are included in the *T'ien-t'ai-shan Ch'üan-chih*, 6 vols., ed. in 1717 by Chang Lien-yüan. The earliest Japanese account is by the monk Jōjin, who went to China in 1072 and visited the mountain the same year. He died in China in 1081. See his *San Tendai Godai-san Ki*, Bussho Kankō-kai, ed., Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho: Yūhō-den Sōsho, vol. III (Tokyo, 1959), p. 336.
2. Sanari Kentarō, ed., *Yōkyoku Taikan*, II (Tokyo, 1930), pp. 1373–1381.
3. Tsuji Nobuo, *Kisō no Keifu* (Tokyo, 1970), pp. 84–85.
4. Asaoka Okisada, *Zōtei Koga Bikō* (Tokyo, 1912), II, pp. 1065–1067.
5. Minamoto Toyomune, "The Asakura Clan and Soga Jasoku," *Kobijutsu* 38 (September 1972), pp. 29–39; Tanaka Ichimatsu, "Several Problems on Soga Jasoku and Sōjō," *Bukkyō Geijutsu* 79 (April 1971), pp. 15–35.
6. For this artist, see Tanaka Toyozō, "The Soga School," *Kokka* 365 (October 1920), pp. 134–143.





## 62

### Chinese Children at Play

Edo period

Nagasawa Rosetsu (1754–1799)

Pair of six-fold screens; ink and gold on paper

W. 360 x H. 168.7 cm (141 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 66 $\frac{7}{16}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: “Rosetsu” on the left screen

SEALS: [handwritten] “Kun,” “Gyo” on the left screen

Nagasawa Rosetsu and his art have only recently become the subject of inquiries by serious scholars.<sup>1</sup> The reputations of Rosetsu and two other eccentric artists—Itō Jakuchū (no. 60) and Soga Shōhaku (no. 61)—are due both to their art and to tales of their personal behavior, some of which are no doubt apocryphal. Reports and anecdotes about Rosetsu’s personality or self-conduct suggest that more than playfulness was at the basis of his odd behavior. Rosetsu’s premature death at the age of forty-five is sometimes attributed to suicide, sometimes to poisoning at the hands of a jealous rival.

Rosetsu was the son of an impoverished *bushi* (“warrior”) in Hyōgo prefecture, but is said to have been adopted by the Nagasawa family in the suburb of Kyoto. Sometime before 1782, when he was in his late twenties, he was in Kyoto studying painting with Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), the leading realist artist and an extremely successful one. Numerous anecdotes describe the irreconcilable differences between the two opposite personalities: the well-adjusted, mild, if banal teacher, and the imaginative, but often abrasive and aggressive pupil. A much-repeated story, no doubt embellished, has it that Rosetsu once presented to Ōkyo, for correction, a painting by Ōkyo that the teacher had forgotten. Ōkyo criticized it severely and suggested improvements, only to learn that it was his own painting, not Rosetsu’s. Although after this incident Rosetsu is said to have been expelled from Ōkyo’s studio, his association with his teacher, who apparently regarded him as a talented artist, seems to have lasted most of his life. Evidence suggests that as late as 1790, Ōkyo sent Rosetsu as his substitute to complete assignments granted him in the provinces and collaborated with him on



important projects. Most of Rosetsu's work remains in the provinces where he was sent to complete these commissions. Many large screen paintings remain in Buddhist temples in the Kii area (modern Wakayama prefecture), where Rosetsu stayed for two years from 1786 to 1787. The Kishimoto family in the Hyōgo prefecture, whose ancestors patronized both Ōkyo and Rosetsu, owns perhaps the single largest collection of Rosetsu's paintings.

Because the number of dated paintings is insufficient, it is difficult to determine the specific time of the development of Rosetsu's "eccentric," often turbulent style, which veers far away from Ōkyo's academic, respectable, and unimaginative art. Recent scholarship seems to endorse a suggestion once made by the late Aimi Kōu that Rosetsu's individualism may have been encouraged by his association and friendship with some Zen monks at Myōshinji and Tōfukuji in Kyoto.<sup>2</sup> Among the three "eccentric" artists, Rosetsu most severely violated the traditional canon of Japanese painting. In his dynamic ink paintings, especially the screen paintings at Yakushiji in Nara and at Sōdōji in Waka-

yama and in a series of paintings depicting deformed sea life, Rosetsu viewed nature from a totally unexpected angle, one that often jars, baffles, and delights the unsuspecting beholder. In some of these paintings, he completely ignored the linear quality of Chinese brush work in favor of soft, wet ink washes over broad areas, somewhat similar to Western water colors, but executed with impatience and explosive energy.

Recent studies by Doi Tsuguyoshi and Yamakawa Takeshi suggest that Rosetsu's works made when he was in his twenties follow Ōkyo's style quite faithfully.<sup>3</sup> During this earliest period, until about 1785, Rosetsu painted some realistic, minutely detailed, and colorful pictures of birds and strangely erotic portrayals of Chinese women in elegant costumes. His signature from this period is written in careful *kaisho* (regular script) style, using sharp, thin, and rigid strokes. His tight, textbook style of calligraphy began to loosen around 1790, gradually evolving into a bolder, more individualistic mode. Several years prior to this change in calligraphy, his painting style underwent a profound transformation, most eloquently expressed in



the paintings in the Kii area dating from 1786 and 1787. These paintings represent Rosetsu's art at its mature stage, powerful and free in expression. The paintings assigned to the last several years of his life often show softened brushstrokes and a less self-conscious spectacle. Some of them are lyrical and romantic, executed in soft, "boneless" brushstrokes of light, watery ink. His signature became even less rigid, usually written in the most abbreviated grass style (*sōsho*).

The humorous screen paintings here fall in the earlier phase of Rosetsu's career, since their subject and style evidently reflect Ōkyo's impact. Many generations of Kanō artists and Chinese painters depicted Chinese children at play. Ōkyo also repeated the subject many times, probably because it appealed to public sentiment. Rosetsu's rendition of this theme, however,

provides a twist of humor and surprise, with the incredibly large elephant that completely dominates the right-hand composition. Perhaps Rosetsu's portrayal of Chinese children also proved a commercial success, for we know a number of almost identical versions in Japanese and American collections. The two screens of this pair have no narrative relationship. The children on the left screen play the ancient game of "child snatching," in which the "catcher" at the extreme right tries to grab the last child at the end of the long winding train of children, who are protected by a "parent" with outstretched arms. A striking contrast marks the two paintings: an enormous mass on the right and a snaky line reminiscent of a Chinese dragon on the left. On the elephant screen, two children try to feed the animal with bamboo leaves, while others joyfully investigate its enormous dimensions. The elephant has been somewhat fantasized here: he is shown with a modest fluffy beard. The children, some of them with shaven heads, are described with amazing individuality of facial expressions. Undoubtedly, the figures were modeled after Chinese prototypes or after precedents set by Ōkyo, but Rosetsu's children are more vivacious than those of his teacher; his brushstrokes have more speed and freedom, pointing the direction to his more dynamic style of a few years later. The signature also hints at his later style. It is less formal than in earlier signatures and has assumed a bolder flourish. A similar signature is found on an *ema* ("votive tablet") at Hie Shrine in Ōtsu, Kyoto prefecture, which is inscribed with the year 1792. The Burke screens may be dated slightly earlier than this *ema*. Two seals of Rosetsu beneath the signature on the left screen of the Burke pair are rare examples; both of them are handwritten rather than impressed with a seal.

1. The result of the most recent Japanese research on Rosetsu is summarized in Robert Moes, *Rosetsu: Exhibition of Paintings by Nagasawa Rosetsu* (Denver, 1973).
2. Yamakawa Takeshi, "Nagasawa Rosetsu and His Works Remaining in the Southern Kii Province," *Kokka* 860 (November 1963), pp. 59 and 63, n.6.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 7.



## 63

### Scenes from Four Seasons

Edo period

Komai Ki (1747–1797)

Handscroll; color on two pieces of silk

H. 32.5 cm (12<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: Section 1, “Genki”; section 2, “Genki,”  
with the date of “a winter day toward the end of the  
seventh year, An’ei era [1778]”

SEALS: “Genki no In” on both sections

These paintings represent the most typical activities of the four seasons of the year, a theme poignant with memories for the Japanese. The first scene depicts the Hozu Rapids, which run in the northwest of Kyoto. The banks of this turbulent river, especially around Arashi-yama, have been the favorite site of Kyoto citizens for viewing cherry blossoms in springtime. In the foreground, behind a temporary curtain enclosure, a woman plays a thirteen-stringed instrument called a *koto*, while her companions enjoy their food and drinks. Their male companions and servants also relish a box lunch outside the curtain. Some figures near the





riverbank watch fishermen at work and the busy traffic on the river. Both sides of the river are enveloped in pink-white cherry blossoms—the ultimate symbol of spring.

With a short break in the flow of the river, the scene shifts to the favorite summer pastime along the banks of the Kamo River, which cuts through the eastern section of the city from north to south. In the early years of the seventeenth century, a heavy concentration of restaurants developed at a point where the Kamo River meets Shijō Street. It became customary for these shops to place small benches onto the shoal during hot summer months, so that their guests could enjoy the cool breeze moving over the river (see no. 94). Here, men and women dressed in gossamery summer cloaks pass by the benches set up in the shallow water, and small stalls sell tea, candies, and fans. On the uninhabited sandbar, tramps delight in their own simple pleasures. Restaurants along the upper stream, with their festive lanterns piercing the thick evening mist, echo the nostalgic scene along the riverbanks. The artist's

signature, "Genki," and his seal, "Genki no In," are placed at the end of this scene. Genki's real name was Komai Ki, but he adopted the name Minamoto, which is also pronounced Gen.

The second section, painted on a different piece of silk, depicts activities on the downtown streets of the capital during the autumn Bon, the festival dedicated to the dead. Kyoto's citizens pour out into the streets to dance in abandon under paper lanterns strung up between the houses along both sides of the street. The second scene, the last of four in this scroll, illustrates the traditional tasks of the end of the year. Some men are busily engaged in the annual cleaning, beating floor mats, or tatami; others set up New Year's decorations at the front entrance of a house, while small children struggle with an enormous snowball. At the end of this scene are the date of the painting, "a wintery day, toward the end of the seventh year of the An'ei era," and Genki's seal and signature, which are very similar to those placed at the end of the first section.

The theme of this painting dates from the Fujiwara





period; it was the subject of *meisho-e* (“pictures of famous scenic spots”) and *tsukinami-e* (“paintings of seasonal activities”), two major types of secular painting of native origin, *yamato-e* (see p. 6). Genki’s first two compositions—cherry-blossom viewing at Arashiyama and the scene of a cool evening along the Kamo River—represent ancient themes of *meisho-e*. His third and fourth pictures—the autumn dance festival and the year-end cleaning—exemplify *tsukinami-e*. Genki’s depiction of these traditional themes is distinguished from earlier works of the same subject by its use of two stylistic features. Contrary to the traditional technique of Japanese handscroll painting, in which the painter’s point of view shifts constantly, Genki’s viewpoint moves horizontally but remains at the same, slightly elevated position. Another difference is that Genki’s men and women are not gentlemen or ladies, but the common folk of Kyoto, including bums, who are portrayed without idealization or embellishment. Faces are strongly shadowed, and Genki has attempted to show true plasticity and such marks of age as facial furrows and wrinkles.

The new features of Genki’s painting were actually copied faithfully from a painting of the same subject by his teacher, Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), which is now in the Tokugawa Museum in Nagoya. Ōkyo, the leading champion of the realist school of painting and also the teacher of Rosetsu (no. 62), is thought to have painted that scroll in the early 1770s, at the height of his career.<sup>1</sup> In it, Ōkyo treated the traditional subject of everyday activities with a new style. The most prominent among Ōkyo’s innovations is the use of Western perspective, which he learned from Western, especially Dutch, books of science with engraved illustrations.

The “real-looking” depiction of nature in these engravings—with horizon placed low, closer to “eye-level,” and the viewpoint at a single position—thrilled many Japanese painters of this time. Interest in realism was not confined to Ōkyo and his followers; almost all of the major painters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were keenly aware of the shortcomings of the Kanō and Tosa traditions. Some made careful sketches from nature as preparatory drawings for their finished products. Among the practitioners of this art are Ogata Kōrin of Rimpa, Ike Taiga and Kō Fuyō of the Nanga group, and Itō Jakuchū. While these men and others were acutely aware of the need to study directly from nature, Ōkyo’s art was especially indebted to the Western technique. Other painters made life sketches of flowers, birds, and landscapes and occasionally painted realistic portraits, but Ōkyo alone showed an intense interest in human bodies and their movements. He sketched many figures, stationary and in motion. Preliminary drawings for his figure paintings are often sketched first in one color of ink, then clothed in dresses merely outlined in a different ink color so as not to conceal the bodies. Although bodily forms were completely concealed by clothing in finished paintings, the sketch presumably gave Ōkyo a better understanding of human forms. In spite of such elaborate attempts to learn how to depict nature truthfully, Ōkyo’s figure paintings often reveal a tendency to categorize his characters by their sexes, ages, and stations in life. This is especially true in paintings of beautiful women, who are stereotypes of Far Eastern beauty, without any individualization.

Ōkyo’s innovations, as well as his shortcomings, are reiterated in Genki’s paintings. Genki was a very faith-





ful follower of Ōkyo, frequently using Ōkyo's works as his models. He specialized in depicting beautiful women in the Ōkyo manner. In the Burke scroll, Genki introduced only minor changes in details such as colors and designs of dresses. Just as in Ōkyo's original, Genki portrayed men and women according to classified types, with no indication of personality. As in Western painting, he carefully reproduced the shading of faces, but he disregarded the basis of this technique in the source of natural light.

Genki's commitment to Western realism was much less intense than that of Ōkyo. No life sketches by Genki are known today. Above all, Genki seems to have failed to understand the contradiction in following both the pursuit of realism and the traditional training method of the Far East—copying the master's works. Many other Japanese realists of this time fell into the same dilemma; some even copied sketches their masters had made from life. This scroll epitomizes that dilemma.



Ōkyo's original work is in two scrolls: the first depicted activities of spring and summer; the second, autumn and winter. Genki's version must also have been originally arranged in two scrolls. In support of this contention is the placement of Genki's seals and signatures at the end of the first silk piece and at the end of the second piece.

Genki continued to depend closely on his master's art throughout his career. Since he died rather young, at age fifty, he may not have had time to develop his own style. After the master's death in 1795, he devoted the last two years of his life to leading the Maruyama school and helped Ōkyo's young son, Ōzui. But his career contrasts dramatically with that of Rosetsu, who also died in mid-career, but who was more independent.

1. Suzuki Susumu, *Ōkyo to Goshun*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 39, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1969), fig. 15.

## Bamboo in the Rain

Edo period

Gion Nankai (1676–1751)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

H. 131.8 x W. 58 cm (51½ x 22⅞ in.)

SIGNATURE: “Nankai Gyofu”

SEALS: “Gen’yu Kabu” (?), “Rin” (?), “Sō”



Gion Nankai, a pioneer among Nanga artists in Japan, enjoyed the ancestry, education, and temperament that conformed to the Chinese concept of the literati.<sup>1</sup> He was born in Edo to a physician serving the lord of Kii modern Wakayama prefecture) and studied medicine under Kinoshita Jun'an, Confucian scholar and pioneer doctor of pre-Meiji Japan. He also studied Chinese philosophy and literature. Nankai was probably a self-taught painter who learned from manuals, such as the *Hasshu Gafu* (1671) and *Mustard Seed Garden Manual* (early eighteenth century), which were introduced to Japan from China during his youth.

As was customary among young men of good family and education in the late seventeenth century, Nankai started his professional career as a Confucian scholar, serving the same family that employed his father. Perhaps because his artistic pursuits interfered with his duties, Nankai was released from his post around 1700. He then suffered the impoverished, unhappy life of an unemployed retainer until 1710, when he was pardoned and reinstated. Eventually, he became a professor in the school sponsored by the Kii clan. Curiously, no information is available about his painting during his ten years of unemployment, but his activities as a poet during the same period are well documented. Throughout his life, even when he became nationally known as a painter, Nankai continued to write poems and essays on poetry.

All of Nankai's dated paintings are from the period after 1710 when he was established as a painter and enjoyed financial security. His earliest dated work is a painting of bamboo executed in 1719, which is now in the Wanaka Kin'nosuke collection. Nankai's paintings were byproducts of his scholarly, intellectual pursuits, and paintings of bamboo are in harmony with the original ideals of the Chinese literati. In the Chinese cultural tradition, the strength and flexibility of bamboo is likened to the spirit of the scholar-gentleman and symbolizes that which is best and most noble in man (see no. 27). During the Northern Sung dynasty, bamboo, together with pine and plum, which had similar associations, formed an allegorical triplet known as the *Three Worthies* (see no. 36). Later, in the Ming period,

when the orchid was added, the expanded group became the *Four Sages*. Since the tall, graceful bamboo is best expressed in painting by the use of calligraphic lines, monochrome painting of bamboo came to be regarded as a test of the painter's ability as artist and his character as a gentleman. Thus, it is not surprising that a great man of letters like Su Shih (popularly known as Su Tung-p'o, 1037–1101) was one of the greatest masters of this genre.

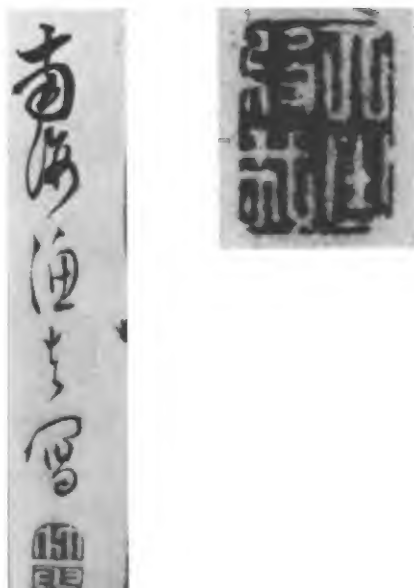
Monochrome paintings of bamboo have been traced to the late T'ang dynasty, long before ink paintings of plums or orchids were conceived.<sup>2</sup> Since bamboo grows in a warm climate, the earliest literary materials on bamboo paintings are usually associated with painters from southern China. Sun Wei, a late ninth-century painter from Szechuan in southwest China, is recorded as the first artist of ink paintings of bamboo, but he combined the plant with other motifs. Another artist from Szechuan, Huang Ch'üan (active until 965), under the inspiration of Sun Wei, first treated bamboo as an independent subject of painting. Unfortunately, paintings by these early masters have not survived, and the earliest extant examples of this subject date from the Northern Sung dynasty when the genre was brought to its height by great masters such as Su Shih and Wen T'ung (1018–1079). Both painters were also great calligraphers, and their bamboo paintings did much to establish the subject as a vehicle for the literati ideal of a noble spirit and technical ability. By the twelfth century, the genre was a favorite subject of scholarly painters, but its popularity was surprisingly short-lived; in the Southern Sung period it was overshadowed by the growth of interest in plum blossoms.

A sure indication of the aesthetic taste and the welcoming of certain subjects of painting brought to

Japan are the accounts in catalogues of private collections compiled during the medieval period. Bamboo as a subject of ink painting was introduced to Japan in the early fourteenth century<sup>3</sup> and became very popular with Zen monk-painters of the late Kamakura and early Muromachi periods; then it declined in popularity and was replaced by an overwhelming interest in landscape painting later in the Muromachi period.<sup>4</sup>

Nanga artists of the Edo period revitalized ink painting of bamboo in Japan. Not only Nankai, but Sakaki Hyakusen (no. 65) and Yanagisawa Kien (no. 66), as well, created many ink pictures of bamboo. In this respect, the renaissance of this genre echoes the development of an aesthetic ideology in the early fourteenth century, when Zen priest-painters turned to the depiction of secular subjects in ink monochrome.

Nankai's painting of rain-soaked bamboo is entitled, in his own colophon, *Chikusō Ujitsu (Bamboo Window on a Rainy Day)*. It has both the clarity of brushwork repeatedly emphasized in the Chinese painting manuals as well as a rhythmical handling of the brush. The peculiarly shaped rock at the base of the bamboo grove looks solidly monumental as well as strangely alive, as though it were growing with the young shoots. Ink tones vary from whitish gray to rich black in a beautiful combination of restraint and boldness. Very light washes applied to the background suggest the moist atmosphere of a rainy day, and the bent branches of dripping leaves form a canopy over the rock. The painting is one of the most satisfactory renderings of bamboo ever created by a Japanese Nanga painter. In addition to a signature and two seals of the artist, the painting includes, in the upper left corner, the seal of Emperor Meiji (r. 1868–1911), who placed it there as a sign of his appreciation.



1. Uetani Hajime, "Chronological Biography of Nankai," *Kokka* 811 (October 1959), pp. 388–392.
2. An excellent survey of the development of ink bamboo painting is in Toda Teisuke, "Ink Paintings of Bamboo in the Five Dynasties and Northern Sung Periods," *Bijutsu Shi* 46 (September 1962), pp. 51–68.
3. The *Butsunichi-an Kōmotsu Mokuroku* records a few specimens of Chinese paintings of bamboo in the Hōjō collection; see Kamakura-shi Shi Hensan Iin-kai, ed., *Kamakura-shi Shi: Shiryō Hen, II* (Tokyo, 1956), pp. 200–212.
4. The *Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku* clearly reflects the decline of ink bamboo painting in China during the Southern Sung period; not a single ink picture of bamboo is found in this catalogue. See Tani Shin'ichi, "Gyomotsu On-e Mokuroku," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 58 (October 1936), pp. 439–447.

## Su Shih's Second Visit to the Red Cliff

Edo period

Sakaki Hyakusen (1697–1752)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on silk

H. 98 x W. 38.1 cm (38 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 15 in.)

SIGNATURE: "Bō Shin-en"

SEAL: "Bō Shin-en In"

The following paragraph is quoted from the famous *fu* ("prose poem") entitled *Second Prose Poem on the Red Cliff*, which was composed by Su Shih (popularly known as Su Tung-p'o, 1037–1101), one of China's greatest poets:

... so we took the wine and fish and went for another trip to the foot of the Red Cliff. The river raced along noisily, its sheer banks rising a thousand feet. The mountains were very high, the moon small. The level of the water had fallen, leaving boulders sticking out. How much time had passed since my last visit? ... I went back to my friends and got into the boat, and we turned it loose to drift with the current, content to let it stop wherever it chose. The night was half over and all around was deserted and still ...<sup>1</sup>

Su Shih was also a statesman, scholar, theoretician of painting, and a renowned calligrapher. His outspoken views on the fiscal policies of the central government so angered the emperor that he was exiled to Hang-chou along the Yang-tzu River in central China in 1079. Su made two excursions to the Red Cliff, a famous scenic spot on the Yang-tzu, the first time on 16 July 1082, and again on 15 October of the same year. He commemorated each visit with a poem in the *fu* form, and these compositions became two of the best-loved poems in the literature of the Far East, frequently memorized and recited. The poems seem to have inspired painters soon after their composition. Works attributed to the early twelfth-century painters Ma Ho-chih and Ch'ia-o Chung-ch'ang illustrate Su's poems. The best-known Chinese depiction is a handscroll in the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, which has been traditionally attributed to Chu Jui (end of the



twelfth century), but was recently reattributed to Wu Yüan-chih, an artist active in the late twelfth century.

A number of Chinese paintings on the theme of the Red Cliff were in Japan during the Edo period. Sakaki Hyakusen is said to have seen, around 1747, a Chinese painting of this subject attributed to Huang Kung-wang (1269-1354), one of the great masters of the Yüan period. Su's poems were admired in Japan, especially among the Sinophile artists of Nanga, who made the Red Cliff one of their favorite themes of painting.

In our painting, Hyakusen attempted a literal depiction of Su's second visit to the Red Cliff. In his first poem, Su described the calm water of the river under a strangely beautiful autumn moon. On his second visit, Su noted that the water level had fallen so low the boulders on the river bed were exposed. Since Su's second excursion took place in mid-October, which is November according to the Western calendar, Hyakusen represented the poet viewing the cliff from a boat under moonlight on a cold, winter night. The

moon, which seemed to Su very tiny above the promontory, appears in Hyakusen's picture as a small shiny reflection on the water.

Hyakusen painted many different versions of this theme, on hanging scrolls, handscrolls, and screens. At least four of these are extant and have inscriptions that date them to a three-year period between 1745 and 1747. None of his Red Cliff paintings are alike. The version here, which is undated, may belong to the last few years of Hyakusen's career, after he had made several other pictures of the theme, since the simple composition and bold, direct brushstrokes suggest a comfortable familiarity with the subject. Dispensing with outlines, Hyakusen painted the sheer cliff in dark, wet ink. The contrast of coal black ink dripped against the unpainted white of the silk is so stark it almost overpowers the light colors of the boat. In turn, the small size of the boat, its passengers, and the reflected moon effectively exaggerate the height of the precipice, which soars beyond the edges of the scroll.



Together with Gion Nankai (no. 64) and Yanagisawa Kien (no. 66), Sakaki Hyakusen is respected as a pioneer of the Nanga movement. Although the stories about his life are not verified, Hyakusen's ancestors are said to have been refugees from an area of south China in Kiangsu province called P'eng-ch'eng, now known as T'ung-shan. They migrated to Japan during the Ming dynasty and adopted P'eng-ch'eng as their family name, which is pronounced "Sakaki" in Japanese.<sup>2</sup> Hyakusen's birthplace is still a question of debate, but it is generally believed that his father was a wealthy pharmacist in Nagoya. He seems to have been educated in literature, especially in the seventeen-syllable haiku, a form that brought him a high national reputation.

Hyakusen is reputed to have received an early training in the Kanō style, which he later rejected. His earliest dated painting, a work of 1720, reveals little trace of the Kanō influence. Instead, it reflects the principles and techniques of Chinese painting. Sometime before 1728 Hyakusen moved to Kyoto, where he rapidly established a reputation as a significant painter. Gion Nankai, dean of the early Nanga movement, is credited with Hyakusen's shift from the aesthetics of the Kanō school to those of Nanga painting. Tradition has it that Nankai's gift of a copy of the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual* inspired the young artist to make this change in his aesthetic ideals.

That any single book or painting could have decided his future course is questionable. Scholars often lament that the art of Hyakusen, of all the Nanga artists, is the most difficult to appreciate completely. Tanaka Kisaku once commented, "To grasp the entire œuvre of Hyakusen is like trying to hold water in our hands."<sup>3</sup> Hyakusen experimented with many styles, seldom staying with one for any significant length of time, and the range of stylistic diversity in his work is conspicuous throughout his entire career. He did everything from *haiga*, a quick, spontaneous sketch accompanying a haiku, to monumental compositions in the Chinese manner. Perhaps because of his accomplishments in *haiga* and other styles more traditionally Japanese, Hyakusen was even awarded the title Hokkyō, a high priestly rank reserved to honor artists. Such eclecticism also occurs in the work of Gion Nankai, Yanagisawa Kien, and another early Nanga artist, Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759). Possibly they did not settle on the pursuit of a single style because their knowledge of Chi-

nese literati painting depended on chance acquaintance with Chinese painters or paintings. From this point of view, Hyakusen's approach to painting manifests the restless, groping spirit of the early Nanga movement.

It is clear from his paintings, however, that one style, that of the Che school of the Ming dynasty, exerted a notable influence on his art. In China, the Che school's academic style was the antithesis of the concept of literati painting, and a revolt against the Che school was fundamental to the artistic premise of the Nan Hua. When the Japanese artists adopted the Nan Hua movement, however, they did not always abide by its ideals. In this painting, the exaggerated axe-cut strokes in dark, wet ink applied over large areas, and the overt asymmetrical composition are the very features disdained by Chinese critics of the Che school as "northern" elements.

Hyakusen's influence on later Nanga artists was significant. He befriended and encouraged aspiring young painters, like Yosa Buson (nos. 73, 74) and Kō Fuyō (no. 67). Hyakusen also published books concerning Chinese paintings and painters. His *Gen-min-shin Shōga* is a catalogue of paintings and calligraphies of the Yüan, Ming, and Ch'ing dynasties, and his *Gen-min Gajin Kō* is a biography of Yüan and Ming painters, published in 1751.

1. Burton Watson, trans., *Su Tung-p'o: Selections from a Sung Dynasty Poet* (New York, 1965), pp. 91–92.
2. Uetani Hajime, "A Chronological Account of the Life of Hyakusen," *Kokka* 825 (December 1960), pp. 483–490; *Nanga Kanshō* (Special Issue on Hyakusen) 8/4 (April 1939).
3. Tanaka Kisaku, "Hyakusen Manki," *Nanga Kanshō* 8/4 (April 1939), p. 4.



## Landscape in Blue and Green

Edo period

Yanagisawa Kien (1704–1758)

Hanging scroll; ink and color on paper

H. 137 x 31.9 cm (54 x 12<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)Colophons by Kien and Miyazaki Kimpo (1717–1774),  
dated to the spring of the thirteenth year of the  
Hōreki era [1763]

SIGNATURE: “Utei”

SEALS: “Min Ka,” “Kien,” “Aza Yo Iwaku Kōbi,”  
“Utei no In,” “Shishin,” “Gungyoku Sambō”

EX COLLECTION: Itō Hirokuni

PUBLISHED: Kiyomi Mutsurō, “Ryū Rikyō,” *Nanga  
Kanshō* 5 (February 1936), p. 26; Tokyo National  
Museum, ed., *Nanshūga Shū* (Tokyo, 1917), pl. 43.

Yanagisawa Kien, who often used the Chinese-sounding name Ryū Rikyō, played an important role in the early Nanga movement. He imparted his knowledge of Nanga and gave encouragement to aspiring young Nanga painters like Ike Taiga (1723–1776) (nos. 68–72) and occasionally wrote colophons on their paintings. His autobiography, the *Hitori-ne* (*A Solitary Sleeper*), published in 1724,<sup>1</sup> does not identify his birthplace, but it is thought to be either Edo or Kōfu prefecture. His father held an important post in the service of the Yanagisawa clan, whose lord conferred on some of his loyal retainers the honor of adopting the Yanagisawa name. In his youth Kien was fortunate to receive the classical education appropriate to a son of the elite *bushi* class, and later he served his lord in the capacities of Confucian scholar, Buddhist scholar, and physician. He also wrote many essays expressing his views on questions of aesthetics.

In the *Hitori-ne*, Kien states that he became interested in painting at an early age, especially in carefully executed, polychrome paintings of the flowers-and-birds genre. As the son of a proper warrior family, it is likely that Kien was exposed to Kanō paintings before any others. But, according to his own explanation, by the age of twelve or thirteen, he had become dissatisfied with the “superficial” Kanō style and was attracted



to the work of the Nagasaki school, then the vanguard of a new painting style. His early fascination with the Nagasaki school, especially with their pseudorealistic flowers and birds, remained with him throughout his life, as he painted many pictures in this manner. Ei Genshō, believed to be a student of Watanabe Shūseki (1639–1707), is often identified as Kien's teacher in the Nagasaki style. Kien was friendly with such pioneers of Nanga in Japan as Gion Nankai (1676–1751) (no. 64) and Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759), and possibly they gave Kien instruction in painting. Another possible influence was Kien's association with the Mampukuji temple in Kyoto. The Ōbaku branch of Zen Buddhism had its headquarters at Mampukuji, and abbots of this temple were traditionally Chinese who were invited to come from the mainland. Many of these priests were painters who brought paintings and books on painting from China. After Kien converted to the Ōbaku Zen faith, he became friendly with one of these monks, Ta-p'eng, who was a specialist in bamboo painting. Ta-p'eng may have been instrumental in introducing Kien to a new painting style,<sup>2</sup> but Kien probably learned more from Chinese manuals than from any single artist of his time.

Kien's œuvre includes many paintings of flowers-and-birds genre, and of bamboo, the symbol of scholarly virtue, but only a few of his landscape paintings are known today. This elongated and crowded scroll shows Chinese scenery, which he only knew from paintings. A winding stream, which begins high in the mountains and cascades the entire length of the painting in a series of waterfalls, unifies the composition. An arched stone bridge in the foreground is the first of three spanning the stream; the trail it meets leads deeper into densely forested hills and higher levels of mountains. A man crossing the bridge heads toward an arched gate where a servant is waiting, and the villa beyond is almost completely hidden among the dense foliage of old trees. Midway up the composition on the right side of the river is a cluster of small houses, and further upstream is a solitary angler. High on the left a mountain village nestles at the base of a steeply rising precipice, from which point a view opens to the pass through the mountains and the distance beyond.

In spite of a vertical movement created by the flowing stream, which leads the eye from the foreground



to the distance in a zigzagging motion, the painting has no real depth. It looks, in fact, like a pastiche of various compositional models copied separately before this painting was executed. The "textbook" character of the painting is also apparent in the use of the brush. Kien seems to have been determined to apply several kinds of brushstrokes from Chinese manuals. Long, fiberlike strokes cover every rock, hill, and mountain. The dots, hooks, loops, and lines—both short and long—forming the foliage seem to have been taken directly from the manuals. Light shades of blue, green, and pink unify various ink tones and the abundant details. The total effect recalls some paintings by Ch'ing masters—for example, the works of the Four Wangs.

Two long colophons fill the tiny space at the top of the composition. The one in the center is documented by five of Kien's seals. Addressed to a "certain friend," the colophon consists of three poems, which read:

[1] Were it not for my poor health, how could I forget my noble ambition. My worldly renown is

without substance. My carefree life has no more vicissitudes. People desert me when I am idle. I while away my days in leisure and avoid visitors who would invade my privacy. I walk with a simple stick, lost among the myriad hills, cloaked in autumn colors.

[2] I do not completely refuse friends who may wish to visit me. But when we meet, we may even forget each other's presence and take a nap, no longer compelled to engage in lofty conversations or to play with the paintbrush. I neither understand nor care for modern ways. People have already discarded the ways of the old. Who can live alone? Perhaps only "one-coined Yüan Fu" of the Chin dynasty, who was so named because he was satisfied with just one coin.

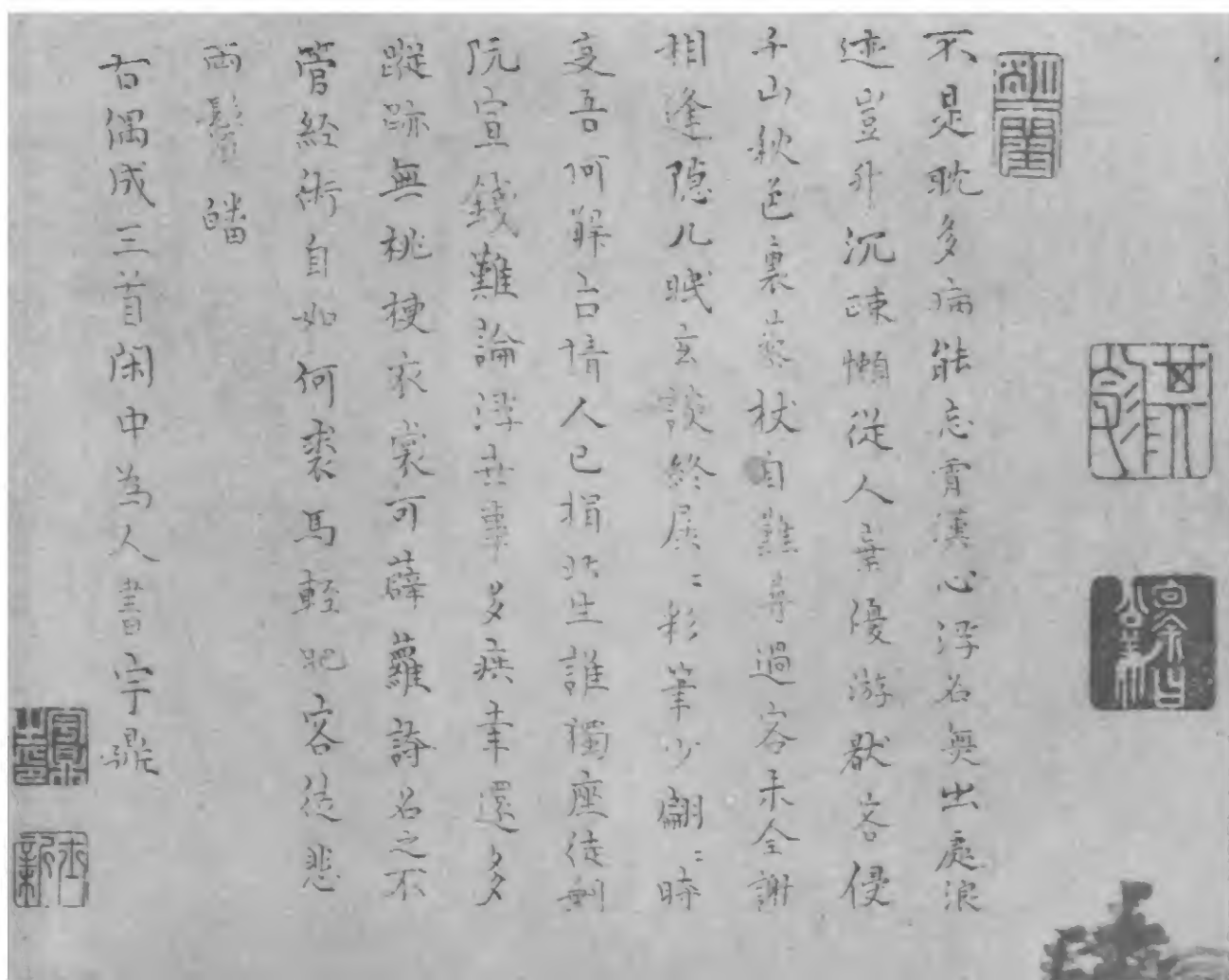
[3] The affairs of the world are hard to discuss. There are some consolations in being sickly. I have no roots, and simple clothes suffice for me now. My poetic fame does not matter. Statesmanship is not my concern. A man wearing an expensive fur coat and

riding a well-fed horse will also eventually lament the graying of his temples. I happen to have composed these three poems some time ago, but I now write them at leisure for my friend.

Utei

The colophon at the left, which is even longer, was written in 1763 (five years after Kien's death) by Miyazaki Kimpo, a literati poet, calligrapher, and painter of bamboo. It also consists of three poems, all extolling the extraordinary beauty of a certain landscape painting, with the observation that it represents mountains and rivers he had seen in China. Since Kimpo never went to China and since the painting he describes in the colophon does not quite correspond to the details in Kien's painting, he may have quoted the poems from a Chinese source.

1. Nakamura Yukihiro et al., eds., *Kinsei Zuibitsu Shū*, Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei, vol. XCVI (Tokyo, 1967).
2. Tanaka Kisaku, "The Origin of the Nanga in Japan," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 127 (November 1942), p. 296.



## Album with Eight Leaves

Edo period

Kō Fuyō (1722–1784)

Ink and light color on paper

Each leaf, H. 23.3 x W. 15.8 cm (9 $\frac{3}{16}$  x 6 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.)

Each leaf, except the first one, with the title written by Fuyō

Colophon by Yamanaka Rankei at the end of the book, dated to 1966

SIGNATURE: None on leaf 3; “Mōko” on leaves 2, 5;

“Minamoto Mōko” on others

SEALS: “Mō,” “Ko” on all leaves

PUBLISHED: Yoshizawa Chū, “Landscape,” *Kokka* 905 (August 1967), pp. 21–26.

The importance of Kō Fuyō in the early history of Japanese Nanga lies not so much in his efforts as a painter, but in the learned example he set for many other Nanga artists. Fuyō was born to the Ōshima family of physicians, but he was not interested in medicine and moved to Kyoto as a youth. The first part of his name, “Kō,” bears no relation to his real surname, but was taken from the name of his hometown in Yamanashi prefecture. Fuyō met the painter Ike Taiga (nos. 68–72), who was one year his junior, in Kyoto in 1741, and the two men remained close friends throughout their lives. Together with Kan Tenju (1727–1795), another Nanga artist, they formed a trio on mountain-climbing trips, calling themselves the Sangaku Dōja (“Three Mountain-climbing Hermits”). Among his other friends were the artists Sakaki Hyakusen (no. 65), Yanagisawa Kien (no. 66), and Kimura Kenkadō (1736–1802), a collector, a patron of arts, and a painter. Both Kien and Fuyō were mentors of the young Taiga, their guidance in literati theory serving to influence the formation of Taiga’s art in ways that can never be over-emphasized. Fuyō was also friendly with Maruyama Ōkyo (1733–1795), head of the realist school, who painted Fuyō’s posthumous portrait on the first anniversary of his death.

Fuyō was a man of wide interests and knowledge. He

and Kenkadō were responsible for the publication in 1777 of Sakaki Hyakusen’s book, the *Gen-min-shin-ga Jim’mei Roku* (*Dictionary of the Painters of the Yüan, Ming, and Ch’ing Dynasties*). Fuyō was respected as a connoisseur and collector of antiques, and he is said to have introduced young Aoki Mokubei (no. 80) to the art of collecting. Fuyō was also Japan’s leading seal-carver and the author of books on the subject. Before his time, Japanese seal-carvers depended heavily on Ming Chinese models, but Fuyō attempted to revive older styles of scripts, using models even from the Han and Ch’in dynasties and setting a standard for later carvers who revered him as the “sage of seal carving.” Interest in artistic pursuits seems to have run in Fuyō’s family. Like Taiga’s wife, Fuyō’s wife, Raikin, was an accomplished painter.

This album contains eight leaves, seven including short titles written by Fuyō in a careful calligraphic style. The seven titles, beginning on the second leaf, may be translated: 2. “Plums under the Still Moon,” 3. “The Boat is Tied in a Heavenly Wind,” 4. “Painting in the Manner of T’ang Yin,” 5. “One Streak of a Gushing Waterfall Hanging Outside One Thousand Green Trees,” 6. “Steep Cliffs with Creeping Vines,” 7. “Tall Trees Bend with the Fresh Wind,” and 8. “Painting in the Manner of Ni Tsan.” Fuyō never saw the Chinese scenery depicted in these small album leaves. He learned to paint from printed or painted models, and his human figures and buildings are unmistakably derived from Chinese prototypes. With the exception of the last leaf in this album, the scenes are painted in tiny, meticulously executed strokes, as in landscape miniatures. Entire mountains and rocks are covered with painstakingly minute dots and stubby lines, reminiscent of the seal carving that Fuyō admired.

According to Fuyō’s inscriptions, the album leaf 4 is modeled after the work of the Chinese painter T’ang Yin (1470–1523) and leaf 8 after Ni Tsan (1301–1374). Except for a certain sparseness in the composition of 8, presumably intended to recall the Ni Tsan manner, the paintings show little resemblance to the work of the Chinese masters. The conspicuous use of a dry, blunted brush corresponds, instead, to the painting in a small



*Album leaf 4*

album belonging to the collection of Moriya Tādashi in Kyoto, which was painted by a Ming painter, Chang Hung (about 1580–after 1660) in 1639.<sup>1</sup> The composition of Fuyō’s album leaf 3, in particular, resembles a Chang Hung album leaf in its use of a dramatically curved shoreline that forms a sweeping arch toward

the sky. Fuyō’s painting also recalls examples of landscapes reproduced in woodcut prints in the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual*. Evidently, Fuyō sought inspiration in Chinese paintings or prints, but unlike Taiga, he lacked the imagination and boldness necessary to develop his own style.



*Album leaf 3*

Yamanaka Rankei, a modern connoisseur of Nanga, added a colophon at the end of this album, giving a brief biographical account of Kō Fuyō and reminiscences of the album, which he had seen in the early years of this century. His colophon, written in 1966, expresses his first impression of the beauty of the paint-

ing and his great delight in finding the album intact, after fearing it might have been destroyed in the earthquake of 1923 or during World War II.

1. Yonezawa Yoshiho, "Scenic Spots of Hsi Area, China, Painted by Chang Hung," *Kokka* 819 (June 1960), pl. 2.

Two Poems from the *Kokin Waka Shū*  
(*The Collection of Ancient and  
Modern Poems*)

Edo period  
Ike Taiga (1723–1776)  
Hanging scroll; ink on paper  
W. 33.3 x H. 26.7 cm (13 1/8 x 10 1/2 in.)  
SIGNATURE: “Shisei, aged eleven [1733]”  
SEAL: [handwritten] “Ikeno Shisei”  
EX COLLECTIONS: Okamoto Kōhei, Kanagawa  
Prefecture; Mizuta Chikuhō  
PUBLISHED: Matsushita Hidemaro, *Taiga no Sho*  
(Tokyo, 1970), fig. 8; Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike  
Taiga Sakuhin Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*)  
(Tokyo, 1957–1959), no. 1; Hitomi Shōka, “Ike Taiga  
Hyōden,” *Nanga Kanshō* 9 (September 1940), p. 3;  
Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Ike Taiga Meiga Fu*  
(Kyoto, 1933), pl. 79.

The artistic brilliance of Ike Taiga lay in his ability to free himself, both spiritually and artistically, from the narrow concept of Nanga, which had been rigorously maintained by his predecessors among the literati painters. Most of the Nanga painters of Japan were not *bunjin* (“literati”) by the strict Chinese definition, because few were wealthy enough to be gentlemen of leisure and were often employed by feudal lords in various capacities. They were, however, *bunjin* in the sense that they were highly educated scholar-artists. Taiga and Yosa Buson (nos. 73, 74), two of the most prominent Nanga artists of Japan, failed to fit even that adjusted Japanese meaning of *bunjin*. Although both were well educated, they lacked a formal education in Chinese literature, which was considered necessary for gentlemen-scholars of their time. Moreover, they worked as professional artists, supporting themselves solely through painting. Taiga was extremely prolific, endowed with unusual versatility, and his dedication to painting was complete. A recent catalogue of his work assembled more than eight hundred individual pieces,<sup>1</sup> and many more not included at that time have since

come to the attention of scholars and collectors. Much of his work, such as the pair of folding screens (no. 70) and two painted fans (no. 71), rely on Chinese subject matter and style, available in Chinese manuals. He also produced, however, numerous paintings on indigenous themes in styles that demonstrate his knowledge of techniques borrowed from schools like Rimpa, which celebrated the native tradition of Japanese painting and literature. Some of his paintings achieve a truly unique fusion of the two artistic heritages.

Taiga’s early life and training are shrouded in apocryphal legends, probably because fame reached him very early in life. The standard account places his birthplace in Kyoto, and his father is often said to have worked for Nakamura Kuranosuke, an official of the Ginza (“the government mint”), who is remembered in art-historical circles as the patron of Ogata Kōrin (nos. 54, 55). However, since two officials with the family name of Nakamura worked at the Ginza in the early eighteenth century, the senior Ikeno’s employer is not definitely identified.<sup>2</sup> Taiga, who later dropped the “no” (meaning “field”) from his family name Ikeno to make it sound Chinese, is believed to have started his formal training in calligraphy at the age of seven under the tutelage of the priest Seikō-in Issei (1672–1740). But he was apparently able to handle brush and ink comfortably even before that time; one extant specimen of his calligraphy is believed to have been executed when he was only two years old.

Unfortunately, little information is available concerning Taiga’s early training in painting, but Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1700–1772), whose name uses different characters from that of another Mitsuyoshi of the sixteenth century, is sometimes considered to have been Taiga’s teacher. Taiga became a professional painter by the age of fifteen, when he started a fan shop in Kyoto to support his widowed mother. His earliest extant painting, entitled the *Willows at Wei-ch’eng*, was painted when he was twenty-two. Its subject and style indicate that he was then already working in the Nanga style, and, although it was not well received by the public, the style was also used for some of his fans. Taiga may have acquired the Nanga technique from the





*Hasshu Gafu*, a collection of eight albums of woodcut pictures reprinted in Japan in 1671, but he soon made the acquaintance of other Nanga artists, who no doubt contributed to his knowledge. He met Kō Fuyō (no. 67) in 1741 and they became lifelong friends, and about the same time Taiga attracted the attention of Yanagisawa Kien (no. 66), the pioneer leader of early Nanga, who encouraged Taiga and sometimes wrote colophons on the young man's compositions.

Artistic activities thus covered all of Taiga's life. Many poets and scholars gravitated toward him: during his lifetime he became friendly with almost all the Nanga artists of his day. Among many artists who

were inspired or influenced by him was his wife, Gyokuran, also a Nanga painter. Taiga's talent was restless; he was perpetually in quest of new styles and new approaches to painting. He was an impulsive and frequent traveler (he climbed Mount Fuji three times), and his œuvre includes a number of paintings that document his journeys. Some of his works even suggest a knowledge of Western perspective and chiaroscuro, a technique he may have studied at the home of Noro Genjō (1693–1761), who was a physician in Edo, a pioneer botanist, and owner of some European paintings, which Taiga thought superior to Chinese paintings.

This piece of calligraphy, signed "Shisei at the age



of eleven” is the second earliest example of Taiga’s work in existence. It consists of two poems taken from a tenth-century anthology, the *Kokin Waka Shū* (*Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems*).<sup>3</sup> The first poem, composed by Minamoto Muneyuki (d. 939), may be translated:

When the bright spring time arrives,  
Even the evergreen needles of the pines  
have a greener luster.

The second poem, composed by Ariwara Narihira (825–880) reads:

Were the cherry blossoms to disappear from this  
world,  
Our hearts would remain tranquil and undisturbed  
in the spring season.

Taiga’s calligraphy teacher, priest Issei, whose name means “one well,” gave Taiga the second character of his name; Shisei means “child well.” Rather than use a carved seal, Taiga wrote the difficult seal characters by hand on this work, demonstrating his advanced ability. Although the calligraphic style of the poems is still a little uncertain, Taiga obviously attempted to copy a model carefully. While this reveals his immaturity, his skill is unusual for a young boy.

When this piece was still in the collection of Mizuta Chikuho, it was mounted on a small, two-fold screen, together with other examples of Taiga’s calligraphy.

1. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakubin Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–1959).
2. Yoshizawa Chū, “On the Development of a Pictorial Style of Taiga,” *Kokka* 811 (October 1959), p. 360.
3. These are poems nos. 24 and 53. This anthology is also available in English translation: H. H. Honda, *The Kokin Waka Shū: The Tenth Century Anthology Edited by the Imperial Edict* (Tokyo, 1970).

## Four Paintings and Five Scrolls of Calligraphy

Edo period

Ike Taiga (1723–1776) and five calligraphers

Originally pasted on an album, now remounted as  
hanging scrolls; ink on paper

Each scroll, H. 37 x W. 23 cm (14<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SEALS: "Mumei," "Taisei," "Sekitei" on paintings

EX COLLECTIONS: Nozoe Heibei, Kyoto; Wakamura  
Genzaemon, Shiga Prefecture

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakuhin  
Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–  
1959), no. 197.

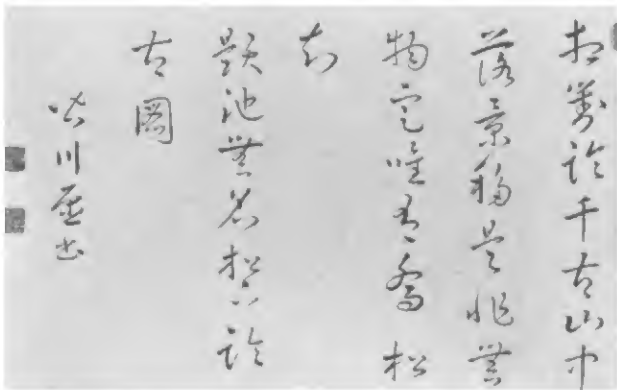
Each of these four small paintings is accompanied by  
a title written by the artist, Ike Taiga (see also nos. 68,

70–72). The titles read, in translation: 1. *A Discussion  
of the Vicissitudes of Time under a Pine Tree*, 2. *Sum-  
mer Mountains after Rain*, 3. *Fishing Boats at the Reed-  
covered Bank*, 4. *Evening Glow in a Mountain Village*.

The paintings were probably composed as a set. Al-  
though the style varies slightly among them, from  
rough broken ink used in *Evening Glow* and *Sum-  
mer Mountains* to the *tarashikomi* touches employed  
on the foreground lakeshore of *Fishing Boats* and on  
the mountains of *Summer Mountains*, the paintings are  
otherwise stylistically identical. Abbreviated, round,  
soft strokes are rapidly, almost casually brushed, suc-  
cinctly capturing the essential features of the subject.  
One can sense the tranquility of the two gentlemen  
seated under the pine tree in *Discussion of the Vicissi-  
tudes of Time*, silently gazing towards the mountains

*Discussion of the Vicissitudes of Time under a Pine Tree*





Calligraphy scroll for *Discussions of the Vicissitudes of Time under a Pine Tree*

across the valley, or imagine the activity of the figures in *Evening Glow*, where their forms are merely suggested by a few smears of ink. The uniformity of the calligraphic styles in the titles further strengthens the unified impression of the group and matches the relaxed mood of the paintings.

Each painting is now accompanied by a separate scroll of calligraphy, with the exception of *Summer Mountains*, which has two of them. The poems, translated below, were composed and added to the paintings long after Taiga's death by a group of famous scholars, poets, and calligraphers. They are: Minagawa Kien (1734–1807), a Nanga painter and a literati; Ōkubo Shibutsu (1767–1837), a well-known *bunjin* from Edo; Shinozaki Shōchiku (1781–1851), a literati of Osaka; Kameda Bōsai (1752–1826), another *bunjin* from Edo; and a scholarly Buddhist monk of the Tendai sect, Rokunyo (1737–1801).

[1] A Discussion of the Vicissitudes of Time under a Pine Tree

Two friends discuss the vicissitudes of history.  
In the hills shadows shift slowly.  
Right and wrong are not always clear-cut.  
Only the tall pine tree knows all.

I write this colophon for the painting of  
*A Discussion of the Vicissitudes of Time*  
*under a Pine Tree* by Ike Mumei.

Minagawa Gen

[2] Summer Mountains after Rain

[a] This painting exudes the fragrance of dripping black ink.

It portrays rain-soaked mountains in the manner of Mi Fei.

Who knows of nature's power to create hot and cold?

All of it is there at the tip of the painter's brush.

I write this colophon for the painting of  
*Summer Mountains after Rain* by Kashō Sanjin.

Shibutsu Gyō

[b] On a hot, humid midsummer day,

I take one look at the rain-soaked mountains.

The bright sun glistens over the shower-washed foliage.

The coolness reaches the world of men.

Twentieth day, seventh month, the third year of the Tempō era (1832); for one month there has been no rain, and the heat is unbearable. I open this painting and, refreshed, am glad to write about it.

Shōchiku Sanjin

[3] Fishing Boat at the Reed-covered Bank

A lone fishing boat on a cold river.

Withered reeds rustle in the wind.

A fisherman pulls in his rods,

but which way is he heading home?

He must be going to join

his good friends at a party.

I write this colophon for Kashō's painting of the  
*Fishing Boat at the Reed-covered Bank*.

Bōsai Rōjin

[4] Evening Glow in a Mountain Village

Mist-covered trees and a picturesque bridge.

The setting sun glows over a village by the bay.

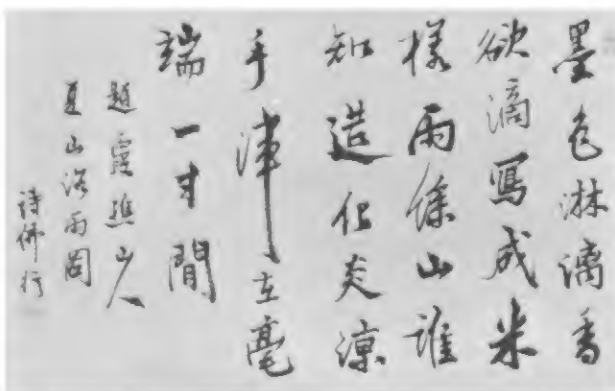
People there come and go in their ancient mode.

Their way of life is meaningful only to themselves,  
While outsiders view it as a painting.

Rokunyo



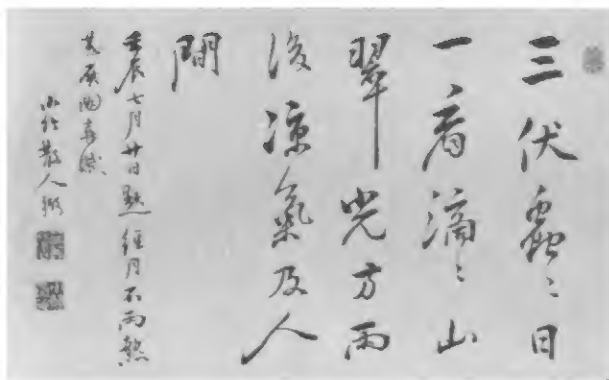
*Summer Mountains after Rain*

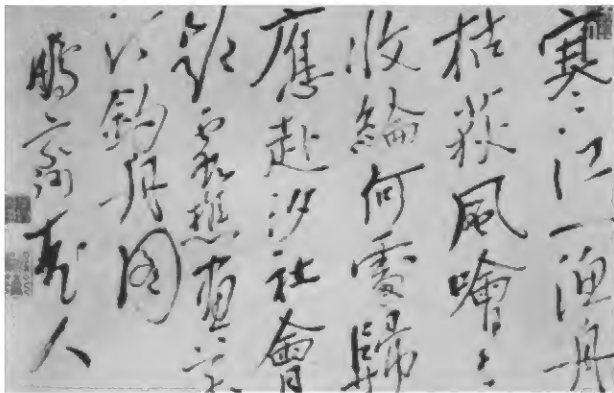


*Calligraphy scroll for Summer Mountains after Rain, poem a*

Although these nine pieces—four paintings and five calligraphies—are now individually mounted as hanging scrolls, they were formerly mounted in a book and existed in that format at least until 1959, when the *Ike Taiga Sakuhin Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) was published.<sup>1</sup> Shortly thereafter, the nine leaves were mounted separately, leaving the eight remaining colophons in the book. Oddly enough, the Burke collection acquired the hanging scrolls in two separate purchases

*Calligraphy scroll for Summer Mountains after Rain, poem b*





*Above: Fishing Boat at the Reed-covered Bank*

*Below: Calligraphy scroll for Fishing Boat at the Reed-covered Bank*

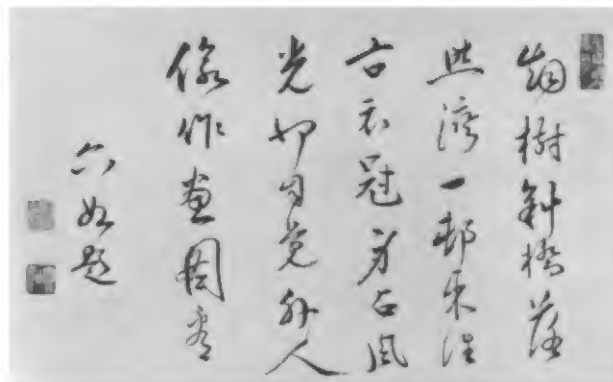
from different sources, more than a year apart. The album was a gift from Yabumoto Sōshirō, Tokyo, which makes it possible to view the entire set as it appeared in its former, though not original, state. Taiga's four paintings were not originally intended for an album. Faint traces of handles on the paintings suggest that they were once pasted on small sliding doors. Among the eight colophons still remaining in the album, one dated to 1799 is by Taya Kei of the Shimostuke province (Tochigi prefecture), who explains how he came into possession of the four Taiga paintings. He found them mounted on small sliding screens at the home of a certain Yazawa in Nikkō, the most famous scenic place in his home province. Impressed by their beauty, he succeeded in exchanging them for his own paintings. Afterwards he began to assemble suitable colophons by famous calligraphers to complement the paintings, and gradually a book was formed. The seven other colophons still in the album were written by: Ōkubo Tadanari (1766–1851), the clan lord of Karasuyama fief in Shimotsuke province, who gave the album its title, *San-sui Sei-in* (*Pure Sound of Mountains and Waters*);

Tachihara Suiken of Mito province (1744–1823), who was a Confucian scholar of some reputation—his colophon is dated to the tenth month, sixth day, 1818; Hayashi Seiu (1793–1846), a Confucian scholar serving the government in Edo; Ikeda Kanzan (1767–1833), the clan lord of Wakazakura fief, who also called himself Minamoto Sadatsune (colophon dated to 1821); Tachihara Kyōsho (1785–1840), son of Suiken, and a Nanga painter of some repute, who was a pupil of Tani Bunchō (no. 81)—Kyōsho's colophon is a faithful copy of Kanzan's, but Kyōsho's writing is in a looser, more flowing style; Shokatsu Kentai (1748–1810), a Confucian scholar employed by the clan lord of Himeji (colophon written in 1800 for the painting of *Summer Mountains after Rain*); and priest Hōzan of Awatani, Shimotsuke province.

If Taya's colophon is to be trusted, Taiga's four paintings were probably made for the Yuzawa family in Nikkō. Taiga is known to have visited the Nikkō area in 1748 when he was twenty-six, while on a trip that included a visit to Mount Fuji and Matsushima, but the four paintings appear to have been done slightly later.

*Above: Calligraphy scroll for Evening Glow in a Mountain Village*

*Below: Evening Glow in a Mountain Village*



Two seals of “Mumei” and “Taisei” impressed on the paintings are known to have been used only after 1749. Taiga’s calligraphy for the titles of the paintings, as well as the style of the paintings, date to a period when Taiga was in his thirties.<sup>2</sup> In 1760, at the age of thirty-eight, Taiga returned to the Nikkō area during a long trip with two of his closest friends, Kan Tenju (1727–1795) and Kō Fuyō (no. 67). These three artists spent almost two and a half months traversing the mountainous regions of Shinshū and Nikkō, finally climbing Mount Fuji. Very possibly, Taiga painted the album leaves during this journey.

Copies of the four paintings executed in smaller sizes once existed and may yet be found. The *Ike Taiga Gafu*, an 1803 catalogue of Taiga’s works reproduced

in woodcuts, includes prints faithfully modeled after these copies.<sup>3</sup> The reproductions are accompanied by a preface dated to 1802 written by Nakazawa Kyūbi, one of the editors, who states that the woodcut reproductions were not made directly from Taiga’s original paintings, but from smaller copies that he had acquired in 1768. These had been made and owned by Kan Tenju, who kept them for his own enjoyment. It is very likely that Tenju made these copies immediately after Taiga completed the paintings in 1760 at Nikkō.

1. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakuhin Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–1959), no. 197.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.





## Lan-t'ing (Poetry Gathering at the Orchid Pavilion) and the Autumn Festival

Edo period

Ike Taiga (1723–1776)

Pair of six-fold screens; ink and light color on paper

Each screen, W. 354.6 x H. 159.5 cm

(139<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 62<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Kyūka Sanshō" on both screens

SEALS: "Ka," "Shō," "Ike Mumei In" on the *Lan-t'ing* screen; "Taiga," "Ike Mumei In," "Gyokukō Kōanri" on the *Autumn Festival* screen

EX COLLECTION: Kuribayashi Shigeru, Tokyo

PUBLISHED: James Cahill, *Scholar Painters of Japan:*

*The Nanga School* (New York, 1972), no. 10;

*Byōbu-e Meisaku-ten*, (exh. cat., Takashimaya

Department Store, Tokyo, 1965), no. 22; Tanaka

Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakubin Shū* (*The Works*

*of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–1959) no. 241; Tanaka

Ichimatsu, "Rantei Kyokusui and Gako Shajitsu,"

*Kokka* 780 (March 1957), pp. 89–97.

This pair of screens is a study of contrasts in composition, mood, and narrative content. The screen on the right depicts a historical poetry party at Lan-t'ing (Orchid Pavilion), said to have taken place on 3 March 353, at Huichi-shan in Chekiang province, south China. The left screen depicts a rustic country scene, the autumn festival after harvest at the foot of Ohu-shan in Kiangsi province, also in south China.

The Lan-t'ing party was immortalized for future generations of literati, both Chinese and Japanese, by the long poem written by the host of the gathering, Wang Hsi-chih (307–365). On a warm day in March, Wang, a gentleman-poet who is often regarded as the greatest calligrapher of the Far East, invited forty-one of his scholarly friends to an outing on the banks of a winding stream where many orchids grew. At the site of the Orchid Pavilion, the group drank wine from cups floated on the stream and composed poetry. Wang assembled the forty-one poems written by his friends, and wrote a preface. His preface consisted of 324 char-

acters in 28 lines, and it is a sophisticated and charming philosophical discourse on the meaning of life and death, past and present.<sup>1</sup> Wang, himself, considered the preface his best work written in the running script (*gyōsho*), and tradition has it that the original, which became the favorite possession of the T'ang emperor T'ai-tsung, was interred with the emperor when he was buried in 649. Fortunately, many copies survived, insuring that Wang's preface would receive special reverence among poets and calligraphers of the Far East.

Considering the unusual respect paid to the preface, it is surprising that reference to paintings of the Lan-t'ing gathering appear very late and infrequently in the literature of painting in China. The oldest extant Chinese painting of this subject is one in the Fujii Yūrinkan in Kyoto, which is attributed to Lu Huang of the Southern T'ang dynasty (937–975), but Osvald Sirén believes that this painting is probably a Ming copy.<sup>2</sup> Other well-known Chinese works are by Liu Sung-nien (late twelfth century), Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322), and Ch'iu Ying (first half of the sixteenth century).

To Sinophile artists of Nanga active in the Edo period, the story of the Orchid Pavilion was symbolic of refined scholarly amusement. Of the many Japanese artists who painted this theme, Ike Taiga (see also nos. 68, 69, 71, 72) is the most prominent. He repeatedly depicted it on scrolls and screens. Another six-fold screen in a private collection in Japan is almost identical to this version,<sup>3</sup> and both share a compositional scheme that is common to most of Taiga's screen representations of the Orchid Pavilion. A broad, winding stream dips very low into the foreground at the lower right and divides the painting into two main sections. Wang's friends (who here number less than forty-one) are depicted as genial gentlemen dressed in Chinese robes. Of those seated inside the pavilion, the man with a scroll spread on the table in front of him may represent Wang himself. Other scholars and young servants are scattered over the landscape along the stream, and many are visible through the cavities of fantastic rocks. Two children standing with long poles on the bridge at the left try to catch the red wine cups as they float on the water.

The first time that Taiga devised this composition may have been for the small votive plaque (*ema*) that belongs to the Yasaka Shrine in Kyoto. The subject of the Lan-t'ing poetry party is a very unusual theme for an *ema*, but Taiga's own inscription written on it states that he painted this *ema* in 1754 at the request of ten citizens. The plaque is now badly damaged, but the painting can be studied from its preliminary drawing and an early nineteenth-century copy in woodcut, both of which are preserved in good condition.<sup>4</sup> All of the major features of Taiga's other Lan-t'ing representations appear in the *ema* composition: the triangular land mass in the middle ground, the winding stream in the foreground, the pavilion at the upper right, and the children in the lower left.

Among the many screen paintings of the Lan-t'ing poetry party, this one, dated to about 1760,<sup>5</sup> is the earliest known example in screen format that follows the composition of the *ema*. In this painting, verdant leaves heighten the freshness of rose-colored plum and peach blossoms on an early spring day. The unusually rich variety of brushstrokes used for the foliage—combinations of loops, short stubby lines, and small dots in graduated tones of moist ink—produces a pointillist ef-

fect vibrant with a brocadelike richness. The richness of texture and color and the complexity of composition in the Lan-t'ing screen contrast sharply with the screen on the left, which is executed in a sparse, dry manner.

The subject of the left screen is a popular Chinese poem attributed to a T'ang poet Wang Chia (851–?), or sometimes, to another T'ang poet, Chang Yen. Taiga copied the entire poem on the screen, translated as follows:

At the foot of Ohu-shan, rice and millet are ripe,  
Pigs are in their pens, chickens in their coops,  
and the door to the house is half-ajar.  
In the evening, the mulberry leaves cast long  
shadows, and the Autumn Festival is now over.  
To every household, its man comes home tipsy on  
his feet.

Ohu-shan is in Kiangsi province, south China, and the annual autumn festival is dedicated to local gods. The festival takes place about fifty days after the official first day of autumn, which usually falls around 8 August in the solar calendar. In the commonly used texts of this poem, the word "*pan*," meaning "half," is used for the fourth character from the top on the second











line from the right. Since Taiga wrote the word, “*tui*,” which means to oppose or to confront, he was apparently dependent on a corrupt text.

The country landscape in the autumn festival scene is viewed from a further distance than the scene of merrymaking around the Orchid Pavilion. A mountain peak towers over a village in the center foreground. The sloping side of the mountain splits the composition, emphasizing the height of the mountain in contrast to the lake in the lower right corner and the low-lying fields and hills beyond.

The autumn festival was another of Taiga’s favorite subjects for scrolls and screens, but he did not usually include the text. Many of these paintings are similar in composition; for example, a screen in the Kobayashi collection in Tottori prefecture is almost a reverse of the Burke screen.<sup>6</sup> No doubt the theme was popular because the poem held an enormous appeal for the Nanga artists. The more frequent use of the screen format for illustrations of the theme suggests that they were painted on commission.

The second seal beside Taiga’s signature here reads, “*Gyokukō Kōanri*,” which may be translated as “the jade emperor’s incense caretaker,” a title for Chinese officials who took care of the incense and candles at the



imperial court. Taiga's use of the title for a seal reflects the aspirations typical of the Sinophile literati of Japan. It was probably taken from a poem by Yüan Chen (779–831), one of the Chinese poets of the T'ang dynasty who was favored by the Japanese, and a friend of yet another T'ang poet, Po Chü-i (772–846), who commanded an enormous respect and popularity in Japan. The associations with jade and incense must also have appealed to Taiga, since he used this seal frequently.

The spaciousness of the autumn composition, its light colors, and the crisp, brittle brushstrokes accentuate the differences between that season and spring at the right side. The two screens are so different in style that doubts have been expressed as to their original arrangement as a pair.<sup>7</sup> However, Taiga may not have followed any rule in combining two subjects on screen pairs. He seldom repeated the same combination of themes on a pair of screens, and he seems to have been more interested in creating compositional contrasts than in adhering to stylistic or thematic relationships. He often paired a crowded composition on one screen with an airy one on its companion piece as in the screens

here. In addition, the paintings' dates fall in the same period in Taiga's career, around 1760.<sup>8</sup> The similarity in calligraphic styles of the signatures on the two screens further supports this conclusion.

1. Ch'en Chih-mai, *Chinese Calligraphers and Their Art* (London and New York, 1966), p. 62.
2. Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (London, 1956), II, p. 21.
3. *Kinsei Byōbu-e Meisaku-ten* (exh. cat., Tōkyū Department Store, Tokyo, 1972), p. 20.
4. Yabumoto Kōzō, "Votive Plaque of the Poetry Party at Lan-t'ing by Taiga and Its Preliminary Drawing," *Kobijutsu* 44 (April 1974), p. 53.
5. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakuhin Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–1959), no. 241.
6. *Ibid.*, no. 247.1.
7. Tanaka Ichimatsu, "Paintings of Rantei Kyokusui and Gako Shajitsu," *Kokka* 780 (March 1957), p. 90; James Cahill included only the Lan-t'ing screen in his *Scholar Painters of Japan: The Nanga School* (New York, 1972), no. 10.
8. Tanaka, *Ike Taiga Sakuhin Shū*, no. 241.



## Homeward-bound Fishing Boats and Country Retreat in Early Summer

Edo period

Ike Taiga (1723–1776)

Two folding fans, now remounted as hanging scrolls;  
ink and light color on paper

Each fan, W. 50 x H. 18.2 cm (19<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: “Kashō” on both fans

SEAL: “Ka,” “Shō” on *Country Retreat in Early  
Summer*

EX COLLECTION: Okamoto Kōhei, Kanagawa  
Prefecture

PUBLISHED: Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakubin  
Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–  
1959), no. 292 (*Country Retreat*), no. 522  
(*Homeward-bound Fishing Boats*).

A few soft, swift strokes describe a lakeshore under a fading evening sun as fishermen in boats return home after a day's work. The rhythmic flow of long and gently undulating lines for the waves is repeated, in darker ink, on the low banks, their smooth lines interrupted only by drooping willow branches and the vertical masts and sails. With supple brushstrokes and the simplest of compositions, Ike Taiga (see nos. 68, 69, 70, 72) achieved a lyrical mood which is rarely matched by any other Nanga painters of Japan. *Homeward-*

*bound Fishing Boats* is dated to Taiga's mid-forties, when he was at the peak of his career.<sup>1</sup>

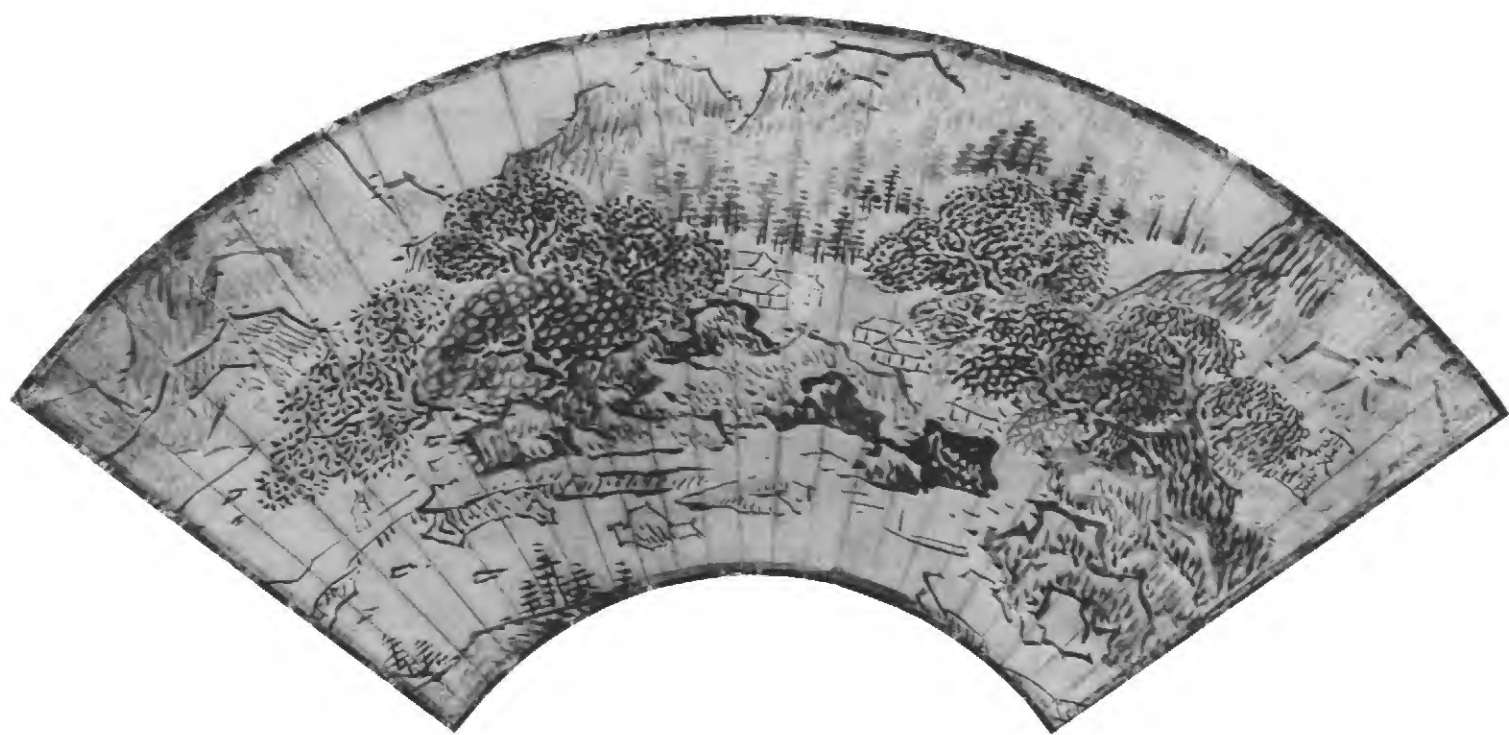
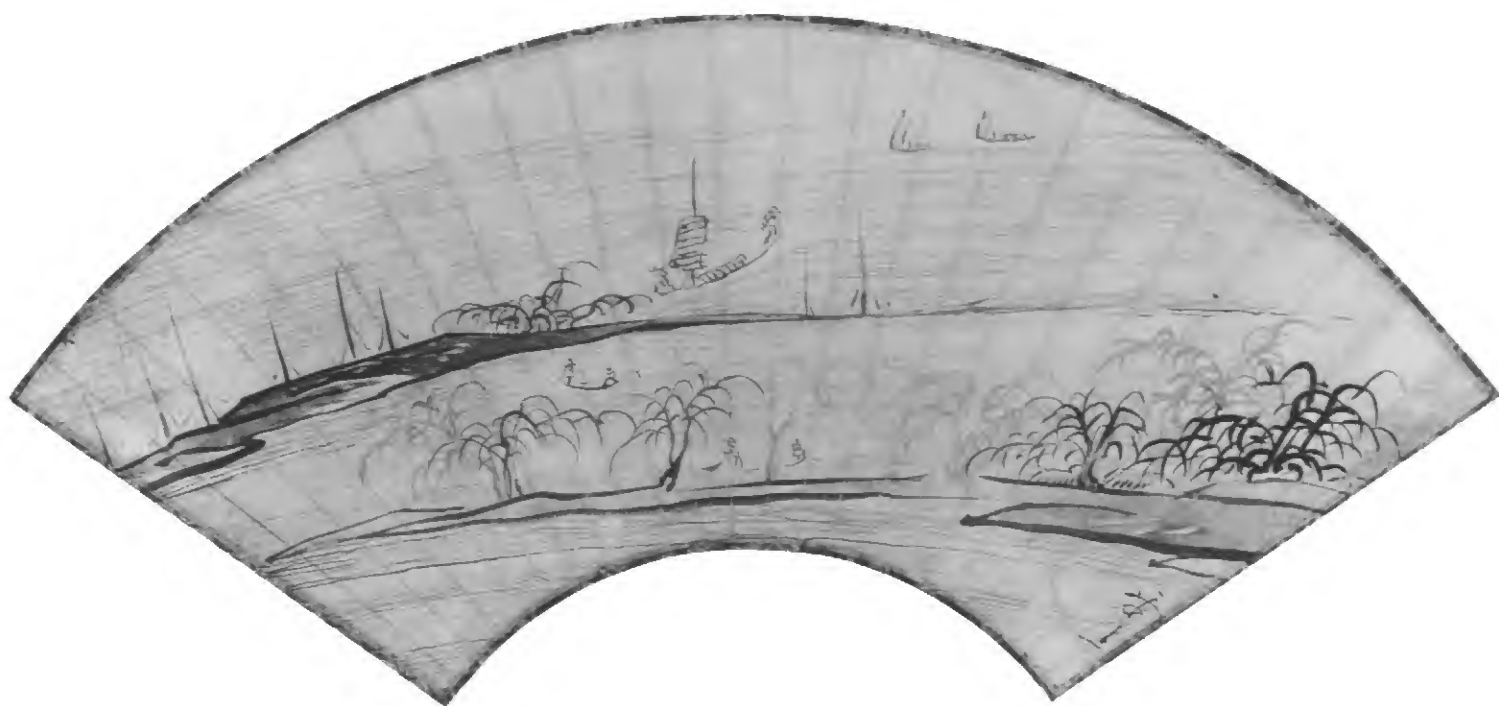
*Country Retreat in Early Summer* is almost the antithesis of *Homeward-bound Fishing Boats* in style. Full, leafy trees and a village surrounded by close mountains are described in ink that evokes the lush, heavy atmosphere of mountains in summer. Pale green pigment is used sparingly on the foliage and ground, but the effect is highly chromatic. Circles, loops, dots, and short strokes that make up leaves and the surface texture of rocks are typical of a landscape style that Taiga used throughout his career. This painting is also dated to Taiga's mid-forties.<sup>2</sup>

Taiga often painted landscapes in sets or pairs, contrasting an open view of water with a closed scene of a mountain village. No. 69 includes a similar, but even simpler version of *Homeward-bound Fishing Boats* as well as a piece depicting a row of houses in a quiet mountain village at dusk.

Since these fan paintings are almost identical in their dimensions and since Taiga has signed the name “Kashō” on both, it is possible that they once formed a pair. The style of the calligraphy on *Homeward-bound Fishing Boats* is much freer, but it is more suitable to the abbreviated style of the painting.

1. Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Ike Taiga Sakubin Shū* (*The Works of Ikeno Taiga*) (Tokyo, 1957–1959), no. 522.

2. Ibid., no. 292.





## Landscape with a River View



Edo period

Ike Taiga (1723–1776)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

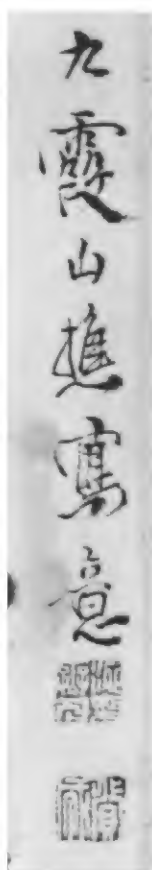
H. 143.1 x W. 80.6 cm (56 3/8 x 31 3/4 in.)

SIGNATURE: “Kyūka Sanshō Sha-i”

SEALS: “Gyokukō Kōanri,” “Ike Mumei In,” “Taisei”

EX COLLECTION: Nakamura

PUBLISHED: *Nakamura Shi Kyūzō-hin Mokuroku*  
(Tokyo, 1915), no pl. no.



This large hanging scroll reveals the mature confidence of an artist who is in perfect control of his medium. From large rocks in the foreground rises a cluster of straight trees; a tall pine stands in the center, topped with a thick cluster of needles that spreads like an umbrella over the thicket. Half-hidden by rocks are three boats: in the largest, two men, their facial features hardly visible, seem to be dozing in the comfort of their shelter. A few fishing boats ply the calm waters, and in the background mountains cradle a village of large houses. The scene is dominated by a tall mountain, which leans precariously as it sweeps into the sky.

Ike Taiga (see nos. 68–71) handled the ink-soaked brush quickly and freely, limiting the strokes to his few favorites. Light touches of blue color are skillfully applied, especially to pine needles and small trees surrounding the large, central pine, and are punctuated occasionally by spots of bright red.

The painting must be dated to the mature period of Taiga's career, around 1770, when he was in his forties.



## Landscape with a Solitary Hut

Edo period

Yosa Buson (1716–1783)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

H. 116.2 x W. 33.5 cm (45¾ x 13¼ in.)

SIGNATURE: "Tōsei Sha Chōkō painted this at  
Sankaken Studio"

SEALS: "Sha Chōkō In," "Hatsuboku Seikon"

With Ike Taiga (nos. 68–72), Yosa Buson is one of the two major painters of Nanga.<sup>1</sup> He was also one of the most important poets of the Edo period.<sup>2</sup> Buson's literary accomplishment was not in Chinese poetry, the primary interest of the Nanga group, however, but in haiku, a distinctly Japanese form in seventeen syllables. Buson also founded a style of his own in Nanga painting, in which Chinese models and ideals were completely assimilated to suit his own taste and that of the native Japanese.

Buson's early life is still not clear, but it is generally agreed that he was born in Osaka and that his family was the Taniguchi, who were modest farmers. Around 1735, when Buson was about twenty, he moved to Edo. There, his first encounter with art was not in painting, but in haiku, which he first studied briefly with Uchida Senzan (d. 1758), then from 1737 with Hayano Hajin (1677–1742). He quickly established himself as a poet; his poems were published regularly in anthologies from 1738. From his early career as a poet, Buson admired Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), the greatest haiku poet; in his later years Buson was regarded as the master who restored haiku to the excellence of Bashō's work. In 1744, he adopted "Buson" as his haiku name, with which he is also best known as a painter. Buson himself signed it only on his *haiga*, the illustration accompanying the haiku, while using many other names on paintings unrelated to haiku.

Buson apparently learned to paint while working as a young poet in Edo, and he illustrated one of his own poems in a book published in 1738. Nothing is known, however, about his early training or about his teacher.



All of his early paintings show human figures and reflect some knowledge of Kanō or Tosa styles,<sup>3</sup> but nothing of Nanga. Hattori Nankaku (1683–1759), a Confucian scholar and Nanga pioneer, is sometimes believed to have introduced Buson to the Nanga ideals, but Buson's knowledge of Nanga was probably acquired much later in his life.

The death in 1742 of Hajin seems to have prompted Buson to leave Edo on a long journey to the north, retracing Bashō's steps made famous by his travel diary, the *Oku no Hosomichi* (*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*).<sup>4</sup> Buson's wandering lasted almost ten years, before he finally settled in Kyoto in 1751. From about this time, he seems to have spent more time on painting, and his temporary move to Yosa, of Tango, to the northwest of Kyoto, seems to have been made so that he could devote more time to painting. The surname of Yosano (or Yosa), under which Buson is generally known, was taken from this small village, which is believed to have been the birthplace of Buson's mother. Even at this time, when he was in his thirties, he seems to have been still groping for a direction, and he even copied a painting by Hanabusa Itchō, a leading Ukiyo-e artist (no. 89). While at Tango, he painted many screens, no doubt on consignment, in a variety of styles: in *yamato-e*, in the manner of Sesson, and in that of the Unkoku school. At the same time, more of his paintings begin to reflect Buson's gradual shift to Nanga. Sakaki Hyakusen (no. 65), a versatile artist who included haiku writing among his many accomplishments, is often considered to be Buson's mentor in the decisive turn to Nanga. Buson's own statement that he had no teacher, except for the masterpieces of the past and present, sounds like the much-repeated cliché, but in his case it may be true. Some of Buson's paintings are obviously inspired by Chinese models, either Chinese paintings or Chinese manual books, like the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual*. Buson's dated paintings also increased in number after his return from Tango to Kyoto in 1757, where he kept a permanent home until his death.

Although he plunged into the busy life of a professional painter in Kyoto, he maintained close contacts

with other haiku poets, and he never divorced himself from that art form. Curiously, contemporary accounts of his activities, either by Buson himself or by his fellow artists, do not refer to him as a painter. His association with Taiga, so eloquently documented by the famous album of 1771 illustrating the *Ten Pleasures and Ten Conveniences*, is almost the only evidence of Buson's personal contact with the great artist who was his personal rival.

This hanging scroll represents Buson's early Chinese-oriented period. In it, the spatial progression is carefully ordered, from the foreground with its tall trees and a small rocky island to the middle ground with a towering precipice. At the foot of the mountain is a small, uninhabited hut. Finally, in the far distance, clearly indicated by a winding stream that leads back into the painting, are tall shadowy mountain peaks. Tonal variations echo the spatial scheme: pitch black ink and rich blue in the near area; pale pink on rocks and mountains in the middle, where black ink is used sparingly. Light blue washes cover the distant peaks, and pearl gray washes the valley, where brush lines are only vaguely suggested. Lively strokes in rich black delineate tree branches, and strokes with exaggerated hooks and twists characterize the surface of rocks. Both the composition and the brushstrokes reveal Buson's close reliance on Chinese prototypes. The deserted hut in the middle of the painting recalls a type that is ever-present in the works of the Yüan Chinese master, Ni Tsan (1301–1374). The Chinese influence helps to date the painting in the 1760s, when Buson had not yet found his personal style.

1. Buson died on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, the third year of the Tem'mei era (1783), a date that falls on 17 January 1784 on the Western calendar.
2. For a detailed discussion of his life and works, see Calvin French, *The Poet-Painters: Buson and His Followers* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1974).
3. Good examples of this type of paintings are in Yasuoka Shōtarō et al., eds., *Yosa Buson*, Bunjinga Suihen, vol. XIII (Tokyo, 1974), pls. 13–15.
4. Nobuyuki Yuasa, trans., *Bashō: The Narrow Road to the Deep North and Other Travel Sketches* (Baltimore, 1966).



## 74

### A Large Chestnut Tree at Sukagawa, A Scene from Bashō's *Oku no Hosomichi* (*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*)

Edo period

Yosa Buson (1716–1783)

Originally a folding fan, now remounted as a hanging  
scroll; ink and light color on paper

W. 48.4 x H. 18 cm (19<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Buson"

SEALS: "Chōkō," "Shunsei"

A solitary man sits in a simple hut, isolated from the rest of the world by a wooden fence and a gate covered with thatch. The house seems hardly big enough to contain the man, whose only companion is an enormous chestnut tree, its branches tumbling over and beyond the fence to the ground. The text written at

the right is also contained within the fenced-in compound occupied by the house, while another block of text, which continues the bursting movement of the tree, concludes the scene at the left. The two seals impressed on the fan, "Chōkō" and "Shunsei," are carved in both positive and negative forms. Buson used these rather unusual seals in the later years of his life.

The painting illustrates an episode from Bashō's *Oku no Hosomichi*, a diary that became one of the most popular literary works of Japan. Bashō wrote it during his journey of more than two and a half years, beginning in 1689, to northern Japan and the coastal regions along the Japan Sea. About a month after he left Edo, Bashō arrived at Sukagawa, a small village in Fukushima prefecture, north of Edo, where he stayed about a week. During his stay, Bashō visited a local monk, Kashin, who reminded him of the great priest-poet Saigyō (1118–about 1190) of the late Fujiwara period.

The text in Bashō's diary, a part of which was copied by Buson on this fan, reads:

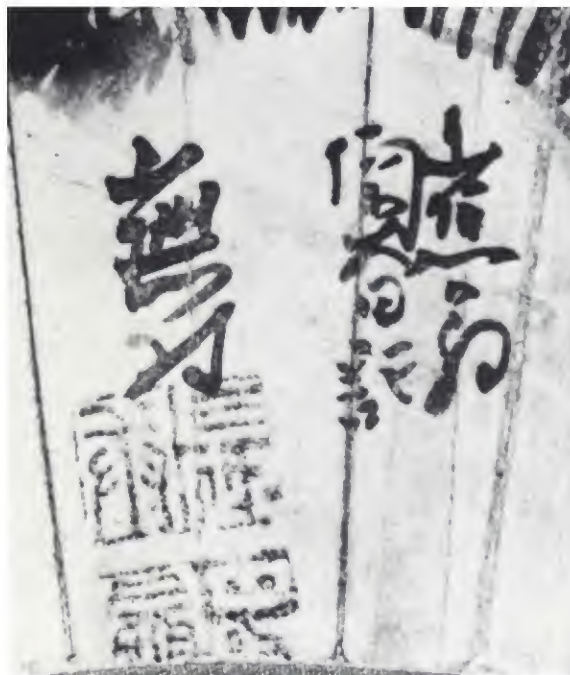
... There was a huge chestnut tree on the outskirts of this post town, and a priest was living in seclusion under its shade. When I stood there in front of the tree, I felt as if I were in the midst of deep mountains where the poet Saigyō had picked nuts. I took a piece of paper from my bag, and wrote as follows:

The chestnut is a holy tree, for the Chinese ideograph for chestnut is Tree placed directly below West, the direction of the holy land. The priest Gyōki is said to have used it for his walking stick and the chief support of his house.

The chestnut by the eaves  
In magnificent bloom  
Passes unnoticed  
By men of this world.”<sup>1</sup>

During the short period between 1777 and 1780, Buson painted scenes from the *Oku no Hosomichi* at least five times—on scrolls, screens, and fans. This fan is almost identical in composition to the scene in a scroll version now in the Itsuō Museum in Osaka. In all the illustrations of the *Oku no Hosomichi*, regardless of slight compositional variations, Buson employed soft, quick strokes to delineate only the absolutely essential elements of the scene. Quick splashes of dark ink over the broad washes of blue for the foliage and the pale pink on the thatched roof give the feeling of warmth, intimacy, and affection that Bashō and Buson both must have felt for this lonely country monk. Buson recreated memories of his own youthful journey to the north and captured the essence of *haiga*, an abbreviated and poignant pictorial expression that corresponds to the brief, evocative haiku.

The painting probably dates to the end of Buson’s life, possibly around 1780, when he also painted other versions of the story.



1. Nobuyuki Yuasa, trans., *Bashō: The Narrow Road to the Deep North and Other Travel Sketches* (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 107–108.



## Spring Cleaning

Edo period

Yokoi Kinkoku (1761–1832)

Hanging scroll; ink and color on paper

H. 108.5 x W. 44.9 cm (42 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.)

SIGNATURE: "Kinkoku"

SEALS: "Kinkoku," "Bokuchi," "Sanjin Yū Nijaku" (?)

Yokoi Kinkoku was a genuine eccentric with a truly independent spirit. He is distinguished in this respect from the majority of Nanga artists of the Edo period, who were either professional painters dependent on commissions for their livelihood or scholars who served feudal lords. Most of the information available about his life is taken from his autobiography, the *Kinkoku Dōjin Go-ichidai Ki* (*Honorable Biography of the Hermit Kinkoku*).<sup>1</sup> He was born in Ōtsu, Ōmi province, a town on the shores of Lake Biwa. According to his own accounts, he entered the priesthood in his youth and became a rather rakish Buddhist monk. Much later, when he was almost forty, he became an active participant in the Shugendō sect, a mixture of Shinto and Mikkyō (Esoteric Buddhism), which stresses harsh asceticism and requires a life of continual travel through the mountains.

While Kinkoku is traditionally said to have been a pupil of Buson when he was thirteen years old, no evidence supports this claim; neither Kinkoku nor Buson mentions the other in their personal papers. Calvin French recently traced Kinkoku's early training to the Tosa school and to the Nagasaki manner of flowers-and-birds painting, styles that are totally unrelated to the type of painting for which he is best known.<sup>2</sup> Judging from Kinkoku's work, however, Buson's influence on the younger painter is undeniable. Even during his lifetime Kinkoku was nicknamed Ōmi Buson, the province of his birthplace coupled with the name of his supposed master.

Our painting is one of many that show this debt. In 1774, about the time that Kinkoku is said to have be-



come Buson's pupil, Buson painted a set of four paintings representing different activities in the four seasons of the year.<sup>3</sup> Spring was represented by men busy at work on the annual cleaning. Kinkoku's painting is a faithful copy of the original. A visitor, his hat tied to his back, approaches a small village where the cleaning and repair of houses is in progress. A man sweeps the ground, and two men add new thatch to a roof, assisted by a fellow worker who brings up the roofing material from below. Light shades of pink, blue, and green applied to the houses and mountains suggest the sunny warmth of a fine spring day.

Although Kinkoku's work is a copy, the painting is an example of his mature and distinctive style. Compared to Buson's model, Kinkoku's painting is rough, powerful, almost expressionistic. He handles his brush with less restraint than Buson, and his pictures look as though he had flung ink and pigments on paper, or scratched the surface with a very dry brush in a fit of dynamic energy. By contrasting the inky black of

foliage, rocks, and mountains against pastel colors, he gave the work vitality and spontaneity; by replacing Buson's short strokes and dots with his own longer, wetter, and coarser lines, he loosened the tight structure of the model.

Although the subject of this painting, spring house cleaning, might seem an unexpected choice for a Nanga artist, it typifies the mature stage of the Nanga movement, when various alien elements like genre themes were accepted. By incorporating motifs of native *yamato-e* into their repertory, Buson and other Nanga artists inspired by Chinese painting adjusted the literati concept to the aesthetic taste of their audience.

1. Fujimori Seikichi, ed., *Kinkoku Shōnin Gyōjō Ki* (Tokyo, 1965). A detailed account of his mischievous youth is available in Calvin French, *The Poet-Painters: Buson and His Followers* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1974).
2. French, *The Poet-Painters*, pp. 34-35.
3. Suzuki Susumu, *Buson* (Tokyo, 1958), pl. 11.



## Crossing a Mountain Bridge with a Zither

Edo period

Uragami Gyokudō (1745–1820)

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

H. 127.4 x W. 54.4 cm (50<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 21<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: “Gyokudō Kinshi, aged seventy”; title, “Yakyō Hōkin Zu” (Picture of Crossing a Mountain Bridge with a Zither); date of “spring, year of Kōbo, Bunka era [1814]”

SEAL: “Takeuchi Daijin no Mago”

EX COLLECTION: Idegawa Shigeru

PUBLISHED: Tokyo National Museum, ed., *Nihon no Bunjinga-ten Mokuroku (Exhibition of Japanese Literati Painting)* (Tokyo, 1965), no. 181; Hom’ma Museum, ed., *Dai Nikai Nihon Nanga-ten* (Sakata, Yamagata Prefecture, 1961), no pl. no.; Narazaki Muneshige, “Landscape by Gyokudō,” *Kokka* 756 (March 1955), p. 85; Miyake Kyūnosuke, *Uragami Gyokudō Shinseki Shū (Gyokudō)* (Tokyo, 1955), I, pl. 25.

Uragami Gyokudō is one of the most interesting Japanese Nanga artists, both for the unusual emotional quality of his art and for his independence.<sup>1</sup> Gyokudō was born to a family of high-ranking *bushi* (“warrior-retainers”) in the service of their relative, the clan lord Ikeda in Okayama. When his father died in 1751 the seven-year-old Gyokudō inherited the post in the Ikeda administration traditionally held by the Uragami family. He was educated in Chinese literature, painting, and possibly in Western studies, which were then in vogue. He also learned to play the Chinese *ch’in* (“zither,” *koto* in Japanese), giving instructions in this art while he was still in his early twenties. His artistic name, “Gyokudō,” was adopted after the poetic name of a *ch’in* he acquired in 1779, “Gyokudō Sei-in” (“The Pure Tone of the Jade Hall”).

The untimely death in 1768 of his master, Ikeda Masaka, with whom Gyokudō had been associated since childhood, seems to have marked a turning point in his outlook on life. The Ikeda family records mention, in slightly scornful tones, that Gyokudō, who had



been a diligent and loyal retainer until Masaka's death, later began to neglect his duties and to spend time with his gentleman friends of leisure, playing the *koto* and painting. In spite of a waning interest in his responsibilities, Gyokudō remained in service for another twenty-five years, maintaining his life partly as a *bushi* and partly as a literati. While traveling on a vacation trip in 1794 with his two young sons, Shunkin and Shūkin, he sent a letter of resignation to Okayama. He was then fifty. The reasons for his drastic move are still unclear, but the death of his wife in 1792 and the love affairs of his daughter, which had caused a minor scandal, seem to have influenced his decision. Since, according to Confucian thought, resignation was an act of disloyalty, a moral wrongdoing that was regarded almost as a crime, Gyokudō's desertion of his post was potentially serious. Gyokudō was subsequently free to travel as he wished, however, so his superiors seem to have viewed his case with a certain tolerance. Later, he was even invited to serve the lord of Aizu in northern Japan.

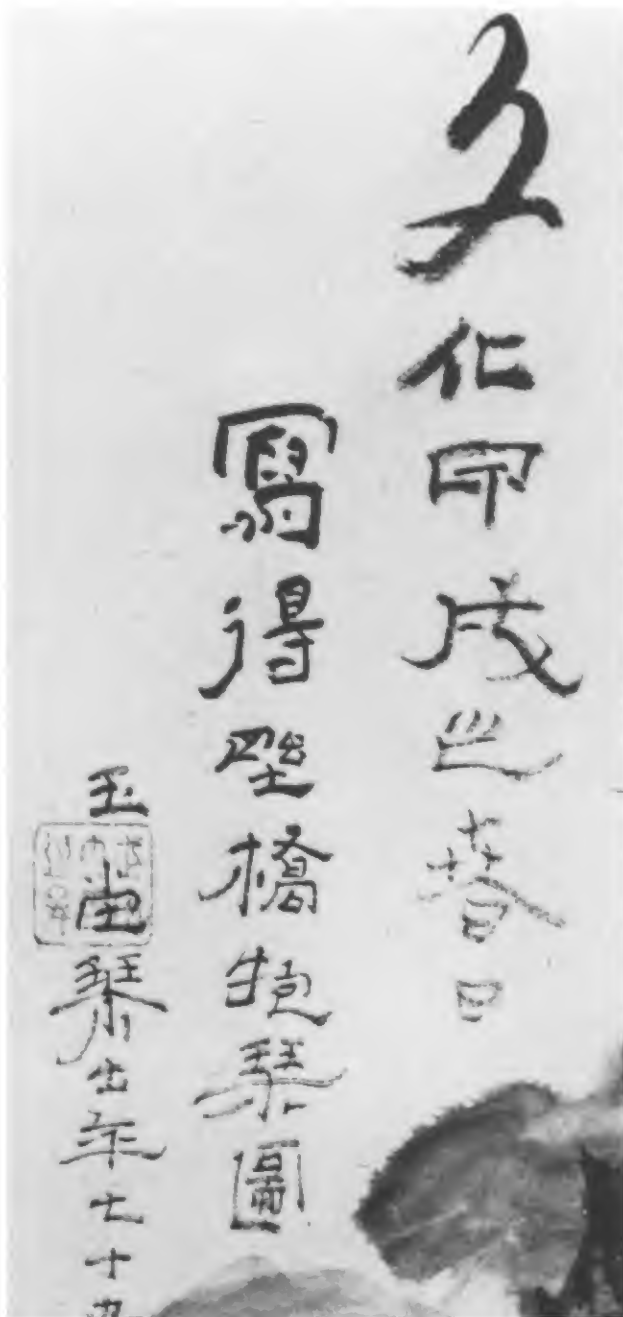
In the last twenty-five years of his life Gyokudō traveled extensively, earning his livelihood primarily as a *koto* instructor, settling in Kyoto where he lived with Shunkin (no. 78). Most of the Gyokudō paintings with dated inscriptions were made in the last decade of his life. However, a few examples of his work before 1794 have come to light recently,<sup>2</sup> indicating that Gyokudō became interested in painting and yearned to be one of the free, unattached literati long before his resignation. When he was still in his thirties and forties, Gyokudō was already acquainted with a number of Nanga painters, like Nakayama Kōyō (1717–1780). A recently discovered album in the Idemitsu Art Gallery, Tokyo,<sup>3</sup> executed in 1792–1793 for an art dealer Nyoī Dōjin of Ise, includes paintings by leading figures in the literati movement: the list of contributors reads like a *Who's Who* of late eighteenth-century Nanga artists. In addition to Gyokudō, the album includes works by Aoki Shukuya, Okada Beisanjin, Tani Bunchō and his wife, Kankan, Kimura Kenkadō, Yokoi Kinkoku, Shiba Kōkan, Minagawa Kien, Satake Hōhei, and many others. Paintings by Gyokudō's two young sons, aged eight and fourteen, are also included.

Gyokudō painted only landscapes. Only a handful of early paintings are dated, and the evolution of his style remains obscure. His early work is hesitant and

uncertain, depending chiefly on the use of the short, horizontal strokes, the so-called "Mi dots" for his compositions. Beside "Mi dots," other distinctive traits of Gyokudō's style are: spiky needlelike twigs of old trees, large ovoid or circular areas of unpainted white, sometimes arbitrarily scattered over the composition, and the figure of a stooped old man, perhaps Gyokudō himself, crossing a bridge in the depths of a forgotten forest. Gyokudō's images are so intensely personal and his technique so individualistic that it would be futile to search for artistic sources.

Gyokudō's choice of life-style as a *rōnin* ("masterless warrior"), a wandering poet, painter, and player of the *koto*, closely conforms to the pure life idealized by the *wen-jen*, the Chinese literati. However, his personality did not correspond to their image of calm, intellectual detachment; Gyokudō reacted emotionally to society and nature. In his paintings, Gyokudō did not attempt to solve artistic problems or to explore the metaphysics of the universe. His landscapes are psychological landscapes. In the ever-present figure of a bent old man, we sense a deep, almost desperate, soli-





tude of the artist. Seemingly, his near-violent applications of ink on paper are inadequate to express the pain of his longings, and his compositions for the *koto* are marked by similar outbursts of loneliness and inner conflict. Possibly in order to reach a full understanding of Gyokudō, both his personal character and the character of his art, it will be necessary also to study his music.

The theme of this hanging scroll was painted by Gyokudō many times. At first glance, the painting seems uncontrolled; short twigs explode from trees like firecrackers, and dry, long willow leaves burst out in scratchy lines. Gaping holes of unpainted voids appear at intervals on the ground and mountains. On closer inspection, however, the painting reveals a careful structuring: mountain masses, hills, and rocks are roughly laid out in light washes of ink and are then further defined by darker, distinctive strokes applied in clear, rhythmic movements, which impart life and vitality to the forms. The old man, accompanied by a servant carrying a *koto* on his back, is just crossing a bridge to a gentleman who waits to greet him. A fourth figure awaits the arrival of the guest inside a steep-roofed pavilion.

The presence of additional human figures mitigates, somewhat, the feeling of forlorn solitude characteristic of Gyokudō's work. The colophon, which was written by Gyokudō, gives the date, a spring day in 1814; the title; and his signature, "Gyokudō Kinshi" ("Gyokudō, the *koto* player"), and his age as seventy. His seal reads: "A grandson of the minister Takeuchi." The minister, Takeuchi no Sukune, was a half-legendary warrior-statesman of ancient Japan from whom the Uragami family claimed its descent. The seal used on this painting is made of metal and is supposed to have been slightly dented in the upper left corner when it was accidentally dropped. The damage is clearly visible here.

1. For a summary of Gyokudō's life, see James Cahill, *Scholar Painters of Japan: The Nanga School* (New York, 1972); Suzuki Susumu, *Uragami Gyokudō Gashū* (*Landscapes by Uragami Gyokudō*) (Tokyo, 1956).
2. Yoshizawa Chū, *Gyokudō, Mokubei*, Suiboku Bijutsu Taikai, vol. XIII (Tokyo, 1975).
3. Yoshizawa Chū, "Album of Painting and Calligraphy Collected by Nyoi Dōjin, I," *Kokka* 975 (November 1974).





77

## Lingering Rain in a Mountain Hamlet

Edo period

Uragami Gyokudō (1745–1820)

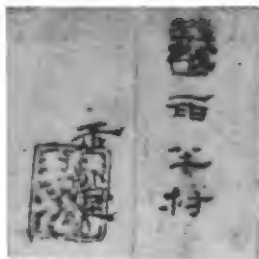
Originally a folding fan, now remounted as a hanging scroll; ink on paper

W. 47.9 x H. 16.6 cm (18 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 6 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: "Gyokudō," with the title, "Zan'u Hanson" (Lingering Rain in the Half of the Hamlet)

SEALS: "Hakuzen Kinshi," "Kinsen"

PUBLISHED: Suzuki Susumu, "Hamlet in Lingering Rain," *Kobijutsu* 30 (June 1970), p. 127; Okayama Museum, ed., *Uragami Gyokudō to sono Jidai* (Okayama, 1970), no pl. no.; Tokyo National Museum, ed., *Nihon no Bunjinga-ten (Exhibition of Japanese Literati Painting)* (Tokyo, 1965), no. 200; Miyake Kyūnosuke, *Uragami Gyokudō Shinseki Shū (Gyokudō)* (Tokyo, 1955), I, pl. 28.



The poetic title of this painting, "Zan'u Hanson," may be translated as "rains still linger over one half of the mountain hamlet." The small composition fittingly evokes the impression of a country landscape in changing weather. Mountain peaks re-emerge through the mist left by a passing rain, but the area below the peaks and the background are still enveloped in vapor. A pagoda and two roofs barely visible on the right, are the only signs of a village, and the tiny figure of a solitary man in the center foreground is almost indistinguishable from the landscape.

Heavy sizing on the paper used for this fan has given it a silvery sheen. Uragami Gyokudō used only a fine brush, dry ink, and short, carefully executed strokes, painting with much more restraint than in no. 76. He also wrote the title and his signature in a similarly delicate, careful style. Although, as noted in no. 76, the number of dated paintings is too small to establish a definite sequence of guidelines for Gyokudō's stylistic evolution, works made in the last few years of his life are less exuberant in their use of dark, wet ink. Increasingly he was inclined to "use ink as if it were gold." The scratchy lines in varying shades of gray, and a few dark spots on shiny paper gives this fan painting a pearllike translucent quality; it may be dated to the last few years of Gyokudō's life.



## Landscapes of Spring and Autumn

Edo period

Uragami Shunkin (1779–1846)

Pair of six-fold screens; ink and light color on silk  
Each screen, W. 370.8 x H. 178.7 cm (146 x 70<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: “Shunkin Gakujin” on the right screen;  
“Shunkin Kisen” and date, “eighth month, autumn,  
year of Shinshi [1821]” on the left screen

SEALS: “Shinsen no In,” “Shunkin Koji” on both  
screens; a third seal, “Ganha Tohō,” on the right  
screen

For most of his life Uragami Shunkin, the eldest son of painter Gyokudō (nos. 76, 77), lived in the shadow of his father’s stronger personality. Shunkin was only fifteen when Gyokudō deserted the hereditary position of the Uragami family in service to Lord Ikeda in Okayama, taking his two children with him and pursuing the life of a wandering artist. Both children, Shunkin (“spring zither”) and Shūkin (“autumn zith-

er”), were given early training in calligraphy and painting and were introduced to their father’s circle of literary and artistic friends. Shunkin traveled extensively with his father, leaving him only occasionally to study or to seek temporary employment with clan lords. After a brief stay in Nagasaki in 1811, however, Shunkin settled in Kyoto to take care of his aging father.

In contrast to his father, who was a noted eccentric, Shunkin was often complimented for his stable personality. Tanomura Chikuden (no. 84), another Nanga painter who was a close friend of Gyokudō and Shunkin, praised the son for his moderation and common sense.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the works of his father, Shunkin’s paintings reflect a reasonable, quiet man. They are gentle and delicate, with none of the explosiveness that distinguishes Gyokudō’s work. While Gyokudō denounced his son’s art as meek and pretty, Shunkin’s paintings were then more popular than his father’s, and he enjoyed greater financial success.

These screens, a pair of spring and autumn land-



scapes, are accompanied by poems composed and written by Shunkin. The colophon of the screen on the right reads:

Mulberry leaves are turning greener,  
Apricot and peach blossoms bloom as the season  
nears the Ch'ing-ming Festival of March.  
I look for the spot where spring is at its height.  
I rest my walking stick and listen quietly  
to the chirping birds.

Shunkin Gakujin

Bright pink peach blossoms glow under the warm spring sun in this scene, and on the right two gentlemen approach a village on a path that passes through the flowering thicket. A bold, diagonal sweep of hills extends from right to left, and a spit of sand juts into an expanse of water, forming a composition that leads to the autumn scene on the left. A natural stone bridge on the extreme right of the left-hand screen helps to make the transition. The poem on the left screen reads:

Old trails follow cliffs into the blue sky;  
Trees are frosted, leaves fallen, and the  
westerly wind is blowing.  
I ride my horse alone on a barren road  
When autumn is about to end.  
The setting sun glows over a million valleys  
that hold crimson colors of the autumn season.

Painted and inscribed in the eighth month,  
Autumn, year of Shinshi

Shunkin Kisen

Three travelers, two following a cliff at the upper left and, directly below, another on horseback accompanied by his attendant, are almost lost among thickly forested, windswept hills. Although some trees have shed their leaves, bright crimson patches still cling to some branches, forming a colorful contrast with occasional tall evergreens. Water is everywhere, cascading in waterfalls and flowing into streams.

Shunkin has avoided heavy application of pigments. The tonal variation is never harsh; dark ink is always

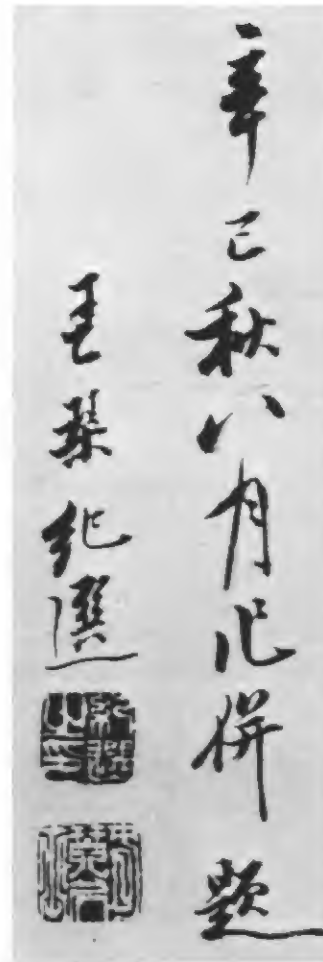


applied in combination with soft pearl gray, and colors are mostly limited to soft hues of blue, green, and pink that blend quietly with the shimmering luster of the silk. Severe outlines are also avoided. Most of the forms are described by a variety of ink dots—round, short, or horizontal “Mi dots.” The gentlemen traveling in these mountains are dressed in Chinese garb, and a few buildings dotting the landscape are also Chinese. The entire

setting is imaginary, yet the screens suggest a warm intimacy that arouses fond memories of the two most beautiful seasons in Japan.

1. These remarks are found in a collection of Chikuden's essays about his teachers and friends, the “Chikuden-sō Shiyū Garoku,” included in: Hayakawa Junzaburō, ed. *Tanomura Chikuden Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1916), pp. 108–138.

*Detail, left-hand panel, left screen*



*Detail, second and third panels from right, right screen*



## Bamboo in Snow

Edo period

Kuwayama Gyokushū (1746–1799)

Hanging scroll; ink on silk

H. 100.8 x W. 37 cm (39<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 14<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Sōshisan"

SEALS: "Sōshisan," "Wakanoura-jin," "Asetsudō"

EX COLLECTION: Nomura Yasumasa

PUBLISHED: Matsushita Hidemaro, *Gyokushū*  
(Tokyo, 1959), fig. 41.

Kuwayama Gyokushū is one of the few Nanga painters of Japan who may be called a true literati. He was born in Wakayama prefecture to a wealthy family engaged in the shipping business. While he showed a clear penchant for painting when he was a youth, he never abandoned his family trade, so that painting remained purely an avocation. Nevertheless, Gyokushū was a productive artist. On a family business trip to Edo, Gyokushū received his only formal training in painting from Sakurai Sekkan (1716–1791), a minor painter of the Unkoku school. None of Gyokushū's paintings, however, shows the influence of the Unkoku style or of the Muromachi-period master Sesshū, from whom the style was derived. Instead, his study of Chinese paintings and books on painting and his friendships with artists shaped his art.

In a monograph on Gyokushū, Matsushita Hidemaro divides Gyokushū's painting career into three major periods.<sup>1</sup> The first was a youthful period, until about 1775, when Gyokushū painted flowers and birds in a colorful and minutely detailed style. Such works suggest an interest in the paintings of the so-called "Nagasaki school" of artists who worked in the manner of Shen Ch'üan (active, 1725–1780), a Chinese painter who lived in Nagasaki from 1731 to 1732. His realistic, polychrome depictions of flowers and birds were favorably received in eighteenth-century Japan. Gyokushū may have studied his work, or that of Japanese painters like Sō Shiseki (1712–1786) and Yanagisawa Kien (no. 66), who worked in a similar style.



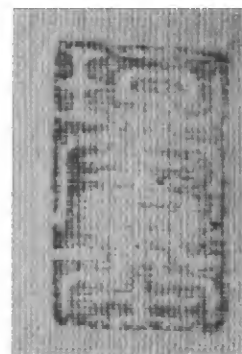
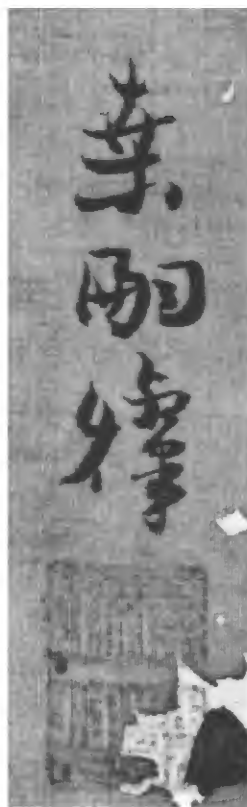
In his second period, from about 1775 to 1790, Gyokushū shifted to true Nanga, favoring the use of soft lines and dots. A few paintings from this mature period also incorporate Western techniques. Gyokushū's switch to the aesthetic ideal of Nanga in his late twenties was rather gradual, perhaps a result of his friendship with Noro Kaiseki (1747–1828), a Nanga painter from Wakayama who remained close to Gyokushū throughout his life. Another factor significant to Gyokushū's development was his friendship with Ike Taiga (see no. 68), which he enjoyed for a few years before the master's death. In spite of these contacts, Gyokushū's output during this period was limited. He seems to have abandoned painting for land development, when the threat of widespread starvation followed a severe crop failure in his locale.

After the land development project proved successful, Gyokushū was able to return to the life of a gentleman-scholar-painter. The last ten years of his life were his most productive. He traveled with his friend Kaiseki and others, and most of his extant paintings date from this period. These works often show the use of darker ink and pigments applied over lighter washes in a soft, coloristic effect. Clearly the most meaningful impact on Gyokushū's art was his study of Chinese painting manuals, which his financial affluence allowed him to collect. Gyokushū had a genuine grasp of the principles of Nanga and the literati concept, succinctly expressed in two of his published treatises. In the *Gyokushū Gashū*, printed in 1790, Gyokushū states that he always painted on a small format and seldom painted human figures.<sup>2</sup> He refused to paint large works, such as screens and doors, because they were usually commissioned by wealthy men and were executed by professionals. The *Kaiji Higen*, published posthumously in 1800 by Kimura Kenkadō (1736–1802), a patron of many Nanga artists and an admirer of Gyokushū, summarizes Gyokushū's knowledge and understanding of paintings, not only of Nanga, but also of various traditional Japanese schools.<sup>3</sup> In these two books, Gyokushū defines the position occupied by Nanga in the history of Japanese painting, and justly esteems Taiga the greatest Nanga painter.

This painting seems to belong to the last ten years of Gyokushū's career. Its background is almost completely painted over in watery, soft tones of dark ink brushed over a moist, lighter ink wash. The blurred

effect is reminiscent of the *tarashikomi* technique, the trademark of the Rimpa artists. Taiga was also fond of this technique; possibly he inspired Gyokushū to use it. Stalks and leaves of bamboo are painted either in very dark or very light wash, surrounded by irregular unpainted areas of white to suggest snow. The contrast in the ink tones is neutralized by various tones of washes used on the background. The painting is not so much a study of brushstrokes as an abstract and decorative statement of the subject, one that lyrically evokes a cold and wintery atmosphere. Gyokushū's signature and the seal directly below it include the character "san," with a radical that means fire. This is a new combination of characters for the artistic name that he adopted sometime in the 1780s, another factor that places the painting in the later phase of his career.

1. Matsushita Hidemaro, *Gyokushū* (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 58 ff.
2. Sakazaki Shizuka, ed., *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), pp. 83–96.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 97–113.





## Preparing Tea by a Mountain Gorge

Edo period

Aoki Mokubei (1767–1833)

Originally a folding fan, now mounted as a hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

W. 49.4 x H. 14.8 cm (19½ x 5⅞ in.)

SIGNATURE: “Rōbei,” with the date, “early summer, year of Otsuyū [1825]”

SEALS: “Mokubei,” “Seibeï”

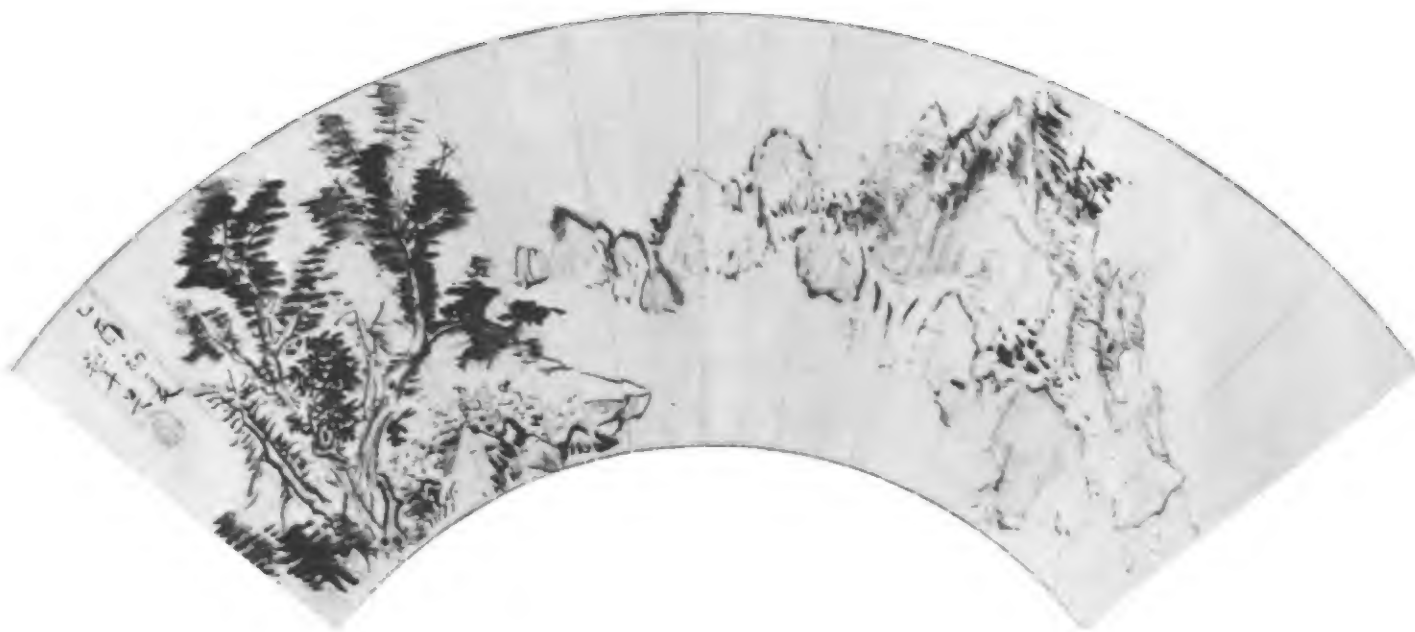
EX COLLECTION: Kuraishi

PUBLISHED: *Kuraishi-ke Zōhin Nyūsatsu* (Tokyo, 1972), no. 28.

Aoki Mokubei was the youngest son of a restaurateur and brothel-keeper in the Gion district of Kyoto, which is still known today for its many restaurants. The name of his family business was “Kiya,” and the first Chinese character of this name, which means “wood,” is also pronounced “*moku*” in Japanese. Mokubei’s childhood name was Yasohachi, which is written

in three characters—eight, ten, and eight—the way the Japanese write the numeral eighty-eight. When brought together, the three characters form one Chinese character that means rice and is pronounced “*kome*” or “*bei*.” Thus, “Mokubei” is the acronym of his family’s trade name and his childhood name. Mokubei had a penchant for playing with names, and, in his later years, he invented another name for himself, “Rōbei.” “*Rō*” means deaf; Mokubei is said to have lost his hearing while working at pottery kilns.

When he was about fifteen, Mokubei was introduced into the art world through his acquaintance with Kō Fuyō (see no. 67), who was an antiquarian, seal-carver, and painter. Mokubei became adept at making copies of antique objects. Once he even had an encounter with officers of the law, when he forged some ancient coins. Today Mokubei’s paintings are often more highly appreciated than his pottery wares, but in his own time, he was respected primarily as a potter. Yet, it was not until he was already in his thirties that he read the *T’ao Shuo*, which was written by Chu Yen around 1774,<sup>1</sup>



and was the first Chinese book especially devoted to ceramics. In 1804, Mokubei published a woodcut copy of this book and shortly thereafter became a professional potter. His wares reflect his deep admiration for Chinese ceramics: celadon, blue-and-white, and enameled wares. His Chinese-inspired works stimulated young potters of Kyoto, where the art of pottery-making was in decline after the death of Ogata Kenzan in 1743 (no. 56). Together with his teacher Okuda Eisen (1753–1811) and a colleague, Nin'ami Dōhachi (1783–1855), he is fondly regarded as one of the three revivalists of pottery-making in Kyoto.

Mokubei made many wares for a special kind of tea drinking called *sencha*, which uses leaf tea, unlike the *cha-no-yu*, now familiar to Americans as the Japanese tea ceremony, which uses powdered tea (*matcha*). *Sencha* is a much less formal kind of tea drinking, and it was the only kind of tea drinking that the Japanese practiced before the introduction of *matcha* in the late Kamakura period. After *matcha* was accepted in Japan, it virtually replaced the ancient custom of drinking *sencha*, but *sencha* became particularly popular among the Chinese Ming literati of the late fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> *Sencha* drinking is believed to have been reintroduced into Japan by a Chinese Ch'an monk, Yin-yüan (1591–1673), who arrived in Japan in 1654. Japanese Sinophiles, prompted by their deep desire to imitate things Chinese and dissatisfied with the highly institutionalized *cha-no-yu*, returned to *sencha* drinking.

The scene illustrating the preparation or drinking of *sencha* was painted quite often by the Chinese painters who were favorites of the Japanese, like Ch'ien Hsüan (about 1235–1300) and Ch'ien Ku (1508–about 1574). Mokubei also produced a number of paintings like the one here, which depict a man brewing tea over a tall ceramic stove on a hilltop next to a mountain gorge.

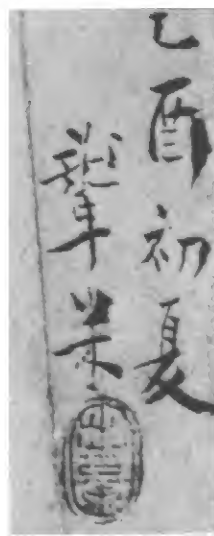
Here, such a man, perhaps Mokubei himself, prepares the *sencha*, assisted by a servant. The plateau where the two men are seated hangs precariously over a menacing ravine, left undefined as an ambiguous void. Mountains, hills, and rocks rise on the far side of the gorge. The height of the mountain and the depth of the ravine would have appeared greater when the painting was properly pasted on the frame of a folding fan, as it was originally intended to have been mounted. The almost lacquerlike black ink contrasts sharply with the dry,

light ink. Black ink concentrated on the foliage at the left shimmers against the silver luster of the sizing agent applied to the paper. This effect is especially apparent under strong light. Brushstrokes are laid quickly and sketchily. Few contour lines are continuous; most break in quick, agitated movement. On the hills at the left, the scratchy brush and the dry, light ink create a crumbling effect of arid, bare rocks. A tiny spot of indigo blue is applied on the man's dress. Red-ochre on the rocks hints at the warm, dry air of early summer. Mokubei built up large forms by repeating small forms, and he defined areas with sharp lines, often ignoring the boundaries defined by the washes. These features are also seen in decorations on Chinese ceramics, such as the blue-and-white or enameled wares.

Mokubei's techniques reveal that he must have learned to paint while working as a potter. While he belonged to the nucleus of the Nanga movement and his close friends included Chikuden (no. 84), Gyokudō (nos. 76, 77), and Rai San'yō (1780–1832), Mokubei retained a unique style.

Most of his paintings with dated inscriptions belong to the last twenty years of his life. This one is dated by his own inscription to an early summer day, 1825, one of the most productive years of his life. His seal, "Mokubei," is impressed at the top right-hand corner of the fan. Another seal, reading "Seibei," appears below his signature, but it is upside down. Tradition has it that Mokubei was losing his sight toward the end of his life and was often unable to determine the correct way to impress his seals.

1. For an English translation of this book, see Stephen Bushell, *Chu Yen: Description of Chinese Pottery and Porcelain, being a Translation of the T'ao Shuo* (Oxford, 1910).
2. For the history of tea and the tea-drinking custom in China, see Haga Kōshirō and Nishiyama Matsunosuke, eds., *Cha no Bunka Shi*, Zusetsu Sadō Taiki, vol. II (Tokyo, 1962–1965).



## Landscape with Waterfall after Li T'ang

Edo period

Tani Bunchō (1763–1840)

Hanging scroll; ink on silk

H. 126.2 x W. 59.2 cm (49<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Bunchō"

SEALS: "Bunsei Boshi Bunchō Ga In [1828]"

PUBLISHED: Kōno Motoaki, "A Waterfall," *Kokka*  
930 (February 1971), p. 35.

Aside from outlines used to define trees and waves, this painting is built up in broad ink washes in various hues, applied almost in the manner of Western oils or watercolors and distinguished by touches of extremely rich black ink. Several other paintings by the artist, Tani Bunchō, closely resemble this work. One version, dated to 1824, includes figures of men viewing a waterfall; another, undated, is almost identical to our piece, except that figures replace the trees. While the technique belies Bunchō's interest in Western painting, the subject reflects his overriding loyalty to Chinese precedents. The model for this painting is one of a famous pair of paintings by the Chinese artist Li T'ang (about 1050–1130), now in Kōtō-in, a subtemple of Daitokuji, Kyoto. Here, Bunchō has retained the general compositional scheme of Li T'ang's original, but his axe-cut strokes on the rocks and mountains are more impressionistic and less structured than those of Li T'ang.

Bunchō was one of the most versatile Nanga artists of the Edo period. His early training was with two minor artists of the Kanō school, Katō Bunrei (1706–1782) and Watanabe Gentai. When he was in his early twenties, Bunchō became interested in Western-style painting. In 1788 he made the long journey from Edo to the southern port city of Nagasaki in Kyūshū in order to find a suitable teacher who could instruct him in these techniques. En route he stopped to visit Kimura Kōkyō (1736–1802) in Osaka. Kōkyō, who is better known as Kenkadō, was the spiritual and artistic leader of many artists of the Kansai area. At Kōkyō's home,



Bunchō met another Nanga artist, Kushiro Unzen (1759–1811), and was initiated into Nanga painting. Bunchō continued to Nagasaki, however, and studied briefly with a Chinese painter, Chang Hsin, a visitor in Japan from 1781 to 1788.

After returning to Edo, Bunchō commanded a particular distinction among his contemporaries for his familiarity with Western painting techniques. His knowledge of Western perspective was particularly useful when he was in the service of Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758–1829), a statesman, Confucian scholar, and poet, who had a keen interest in antiquarianism. In 1793, when government circles feared possible invasions from the outside world, Bunchō accompanied Sadanobu on an inspection tour of the Sagami and Izu coasts south of Edo and made sketches of the coastline. Bunchō worked for Sadanobu again in 1800 as the illustrator for a catalogue of ancient art objects, the *Shūko Jisshu*, edited by Sadanobu. Bunchō's visit to Kyoto to examine some of the city's ancient collections in 1796 may also have provided him with the opportunity to see the work of Li T'ang. Since Bunchō made copies of Mu-ch'i's famous dragon and tiger paintings, which are also in the Daitokuji collection, he may have studied the works of both of these Chinese masters at the same time. The collaboration with Sadanobu may have

spurred Bunchō's inclination toward eclectic art. He copied many old masterpieces from China and Japan, even some in the Rimpa and *yamato-e* styles. In 1805 he made replacements for two scrolls, the sixth and seventh of a fourteenth-century set of the *Ishiyamadera Engi Emaki*.

Li T'ang's paintings in the Kōtō-in are generally regarded as forerunners of the Southern Sung style of painting, the basis for the later Che style, which dominated the Ming Academy in China. If the Chinese standards for literati artists were strictly applied, Bunchō might not be considered a member of the Nanga school. Some of Bunchō's contemporaries, like Rai San'yō (1780–1832) and Tsubaki Chinzan (1801–1854), were especially critical of Bunchō's paintings, because opposition to the Che school was basic to the literati movement in China. Nevertheless, a number of Japanese artists studied the style of the Che school. Many female members of Bunchō's family also adopted the Che style. His wife, Kankan (d. 1799), his younger sisters, Shūkō and Kōran, and his daughters, Shun'ei and Kitsukitsu, are among the best-known women painters of the time.

The painting has an unusual seal: it includes the date of the painting—the era name Bunsei, and the cyclical year name, Boshi—which corresponds to 1828.



## Landscape with a Pavilion

Edo period

Okada Beisanjin (1744–1820)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

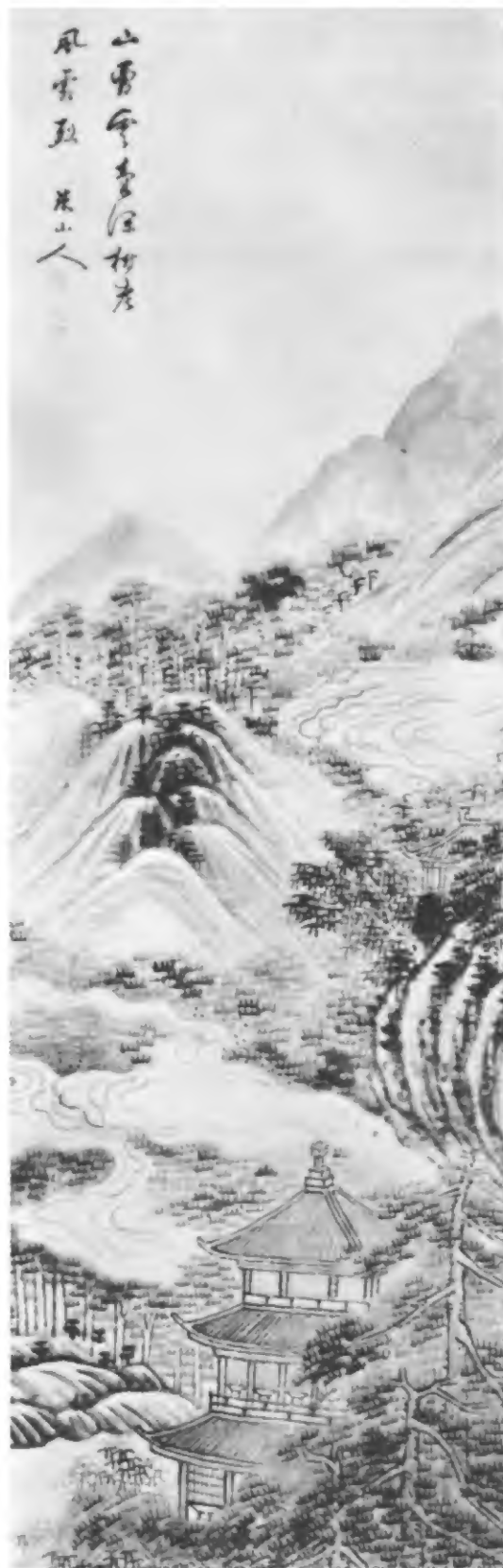
H. 127.3 x W. 40.3 cm (50 1/8 x 15 7/8 in.)

SIGNATURE: "Beisanjin"

SEALS: "Beisanjin," "Den'en," "Shigen"

The early life of Okada Beisanjin, unlike those of many of his contemporaries, is still mostly unknown. As a young boy he was employed by a wealthy farmer in Hyōgo prefecture near Osaka. He is said to have studied books while he worked a mortar that hulled rice; later, when he was in his late twenties, he became an independent rice merchant in Osaka. "*Bei*" is one of many different Japanese pronunciations of the Chinese character for rice, and the artist is believed to have adopted the name Beisanjin ("Rice Hermit") in memory of his early career. He may have also chosen this name in deference to a Sung Chinese painter, Mi Fei (1051–1107), whose family name, Mi, also means rice, and whose famous short, horizontal strokes, "Mi dots," are sometimes emulated in Beisanjin's paintings.

No information is available about Beisanjin's teacher of painting or his early training in art. Since his paintings are marked by a strong individuality, he was probably self-taught. The range of his styles is quite limited, varying little during his career. His œuvre may be divided roughly into two groups: first, spontaneous and powerful works that often depict landscapes and human figures in an exaggerated, caricaturelike manner, with forms built up by long, parallel lines; and second, paintings with compactly organized compositions and pictorial elements composed of short, staccato strokes. These stylistic differences are not always meaningful in determining the dates of paintings, however. Paintings dated by inscription to Beisanjin's early period, before he was fifty, are extremely rare. Most of his extant, dated pieces are from the latter part of his career, when he was in his sixties and seventies. While the paintings show little stylistic variation, dated pieces with signature and/or colophons reveal a distinctive



evolution in the style of his calligraphy. Beisanjin's writing style when he was in his early fifties tended to be sharp, linear, and elongated; in his late fifties, his characters became more rounded and squat; and from his late sixties until his death, he continued to write in a similar style but with more flourish, suggesting an exaggerated movement of the brush.

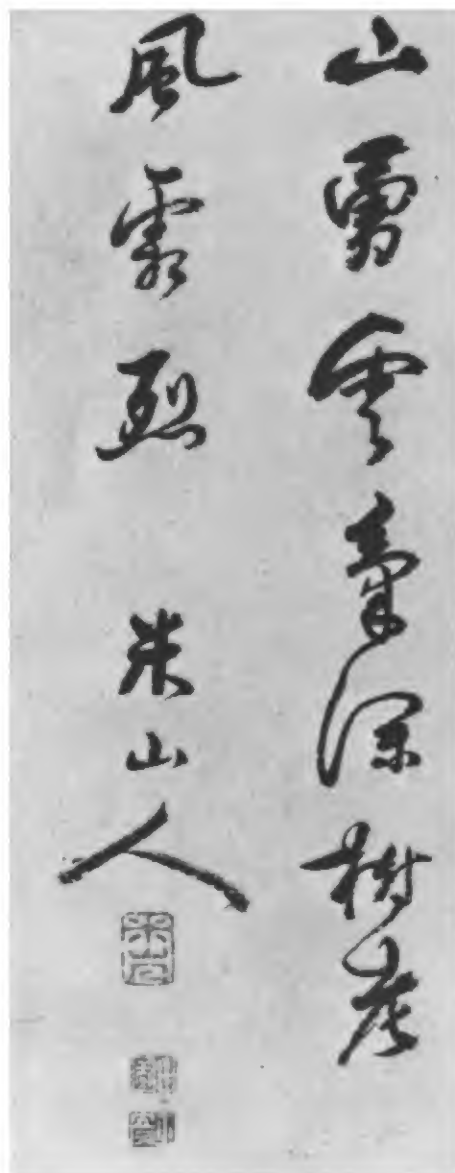
In a short colophon written on this dense landscape, Beisanjin describes the scene in a couplet that reads:

Mountains are heroic, clouds thick,  
Trees old, the wind and frost fierce.

Beisanjin

The colorful, tapestrylike effect of the painting is created by a combination of brush techniques. Light ink washes are applied to the distant hills at the top; dry "hemp-fiber wrinkle" strokes define cone-shaped hills in the middle ground; the cloud formations have distinct scalloped edges, and clusters of foliage are marked by closely placed, teethlike patterns in ink. Light blue and buff colors on foliage and tree trunks heighten the coloristic effect created by short, staccato dots in varying ink tones.

The use of closely placed short strokes and the dense composition in this painting place it in Beisanjin's second stylistic group. Paintings which were executed in a similar manner date from his fifties and throughout the rest of his career. The calligraphic style of the colophon, however, suggests a date in his late fifties to early sixties, when he wrote in soft, round characters without the exaggerated loops that characterize many of his late works.





## Bamboo and Plums in an Early Spring Landscape

Edo period

Okada Hankō (1782–1846)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

H. 127.7 x W. 59.1 cm (50<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

Colophon by Hinenō Kyōsui (d. 1854)

SIGNATURE: “Hankō” with date, “summer month,  
year of Kibo [1843]”

SEALS: “Den Shuku,” “Hankō”

Soft hues, light washes, and rounded contours of mountains and hills create a gentle, poetic atmosphere. A profusion of white plum blossoms announces the arrival of spring, and on the distant hills the first signs of green grass appear. The blue of the bamboo grove adds a touch of freshness to this scene of a village by a river. Two gentlemen on a bridge pause to contemplate the change of season.

The scene actually depicts a slightly later time of year than that described in the accompanying colophon, which was composed and written by the poet and calligrapher, Hinenō Kyōsui:

At the foot of the beautiful mountains  
along the river banks of the valley,  
Snow is deep and ice is packed.  
Yet, the coming of spring is inevitable.  
Plum flowers are cold and delicate; the bamboo  
is thin and pure.  
They provide a setting for the scholarly  
hermit-master of this house.

Kyōsui Kinsō

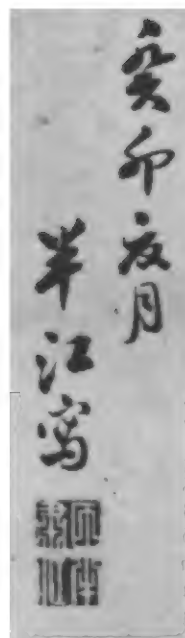
The discrepancies of seasonal imagery between the colophon and the painting are extended to the signature of the artist in the upper right corner, which refers to the summer of 1843.

The painting is the work of Okada Hankō, a popular Nanga artist of the nineteenth century. Hankō had the misfortune of being a son of Beisanjin (no. 82), whose

reputation as a painter surpassed his own. More independent and assertive than his son, Beisanjin taught Hankō to paint, but he was also quick to label Hankō conservative and to assess his talents as mediocre. Hankō served Lord Tōdō, the clan master of Ise, who had previously employed his father. He retired from official service in 1822, two years after his father's death, settling near the Kitano Shrine in Kyoto as a gentleman-farmer and painter.

Although Hankō began painting early in life, few of his early paintings are known today.<sup>1</sup> One of his early works, an album entitled *Enka-jō*, was painted in 1818 in collaboration with his father. Two leaves from this album, which depict landscapes with bamboo and plum flowers, are very much like this painting, which was done twenty-five years later. The gentleness and warmth characteristic of our painting are distinctive to almost all of Hankō's work. This preciousness, which sometimes verges on sentimentality, was no doubt the reason for his father's critical remarks.

1. For the paintings done when Hankō was twelve and thirteen, see Yoshizawa Chū, “Album of Painting and Calligraphy Collected by Nyoī Dōjin, I,” *Kokka* 975 (November 1974), pp. 18–19.



癸卯年  
羊江寫

山之麓澗之濱積  
雪堆冰不礙春寒  
梅花清瘦竹葉他溫  
藉卧樓人

鍾水鈞史



## Rainstorm over the River Village

Edo period

Tanomura Chikuden (1777–1835)

Hanging scroll; ink and light color on paper

H. 132.3 x W. 42.2 cm (52 1/8 x 16 3/8 in.)

SIGNATURE: “Chikuden-sei”

SEALS: “Densha-ji,” “Jinsei Kōraku-ji,” and an unidentified collector’s seal

PUBLISHED: Suzuki Susumu, *Chikuden* (Tokyo, 1963), pl. 136.



Under a dark sky, heavy branches sway in the stormy wind. A boatman navigates a ferry on the choppy water with difficulty, and his passenger shares the stress of the journey. In the distance a small village appears to be soaked by the rain. Wet, dark ink applied with the brush held sideways and repeated in a staccato rhythm over watery gray ink creates patches of dense foliage on both shores of the river. Some leaves are pale pink, and unpainted areas suggest the heavy moisture of rising mist. Otherwise, the painting is almost completely covered with blue-gray and coal-black wash. Tanomura Chikuden not only painted this scene, he also composed and wrote the short colophon. It reads:

A leaflike small boat returns.

Like mountains, fierce waves rise ten miles.

Who would guess that life's hardships are worse  
than the rainstorm over the river village?

Chikuden

Chikuden, one of the greatest Nanga artists and certainly the most scholarly Nanga painter of his generation, is well known for poems and paintings that describe sea voyages in rainstorms. The experience was probably a common one for him, since he was from the island of Kyūshū and was dependent on sea travel for visits to central Japan. His artistic name, “Chikuden,” is another pronunciation of “Takeda,” the name of his birthplace in Bungo province (modern Ōita prefecture) in northern Kyūshū. Chikuden’s life and career reflect

the spread of the *bunjin* concept to small provincial towns far from Edo. As the son of a clan physician, Chikuden was trained to continue his father's profession, but as a youth he showed artistic talent and a predilection for scholarship. He first studied painting with minor local artists; a modest painting of a fish dated to 1796 is still extant. In 1798, he gave up the physician's post to serve as a professor in the clan school, an important turning point in his life. In the same year he was ordered to edit the history of Bungo province, an assignment that allowed him to travel extensively and to examine art collections.

Chikuden suffered from chronic ear and eye ailments, which began when he was in his late teens, and as early as 1802 he expressed a desire to leave his post in order to pursue the free life of a scholar-artist, but he remained in service for another ten years. In 1811 and 1812, farmers' revolts against a severe taxation system occurred in his province. On both occasions, Chikuden submitted a recommendation to the clan government written in unusually strong language, urgently advising a drastic reform of government policy. When his recommendations were rejected, he seems to have seized the opportunity to resign on the pretext of ill health.

After his resignation, the artistic necessity of meeting *bunjin* and Nanga artists in Kyoto and Osaka made travel a way of life for Chikuden. His many journeys across the Inland Sea to visit these friends were a source

of artistic inspiration. Turbulent rivers and bays, accompanied by poems in which he likened violent weather to hardships in life, became a consistent theme of his painting. In 1827, when he spent almost ten months in Nagasaki, he painted several scenes of rainstorms.<sup>1</sup> The Burke painting closely resembles some of these in composition as well as in both painting and calligraphy styles. A portion of the poem in this painting is also identical to one of his Nagasaki-period poems.<sup>2</sup>

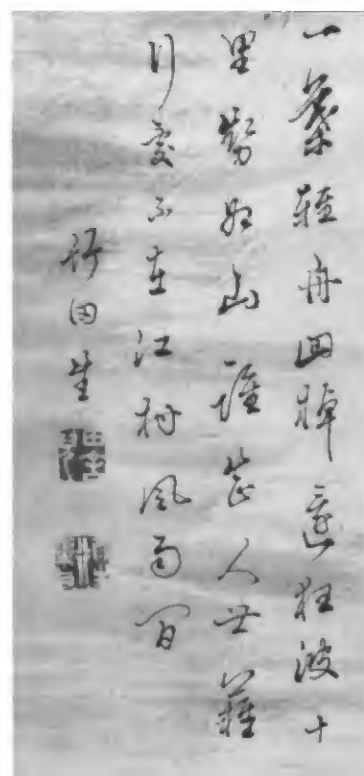
Chikuden also wrote commentaries on numerous famous Nanga artists and *bunjin* scholars he knew in Kyoto and Osaka. The *Sanchū-jin Jōzetsu* (*Superfluous Words by a Mountain Hermit*) is a treatise on painting that includes a critique of work by artists like Uragami Gyokudō (nos. 76, 77).<sup>3</sup> The *Chikuden-sō Shiyū Garoku* (*Records of Paintings by Teachers and Friends of Chikuden*) is an essay that contains personal accounts of the lives of 104 artist-friends and comments on their art.<sup>4</sup> Gyokudō, his son Shunkin (no. 78), Okada Beisanjin (no. 82), and his son Hankō (no. 83), and Aoki Mokubei (no. 80) are but a few of the painters included in this book.

1. Suzuki Susumu, *Chikuden* (Tokyo, 1963), pls. 34, 36.

2. *Ibid.*, pl. 37.

3. Hayakawa Junzaburō, ed., *Tanomura Chikuden Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1916), pp. 139–159.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 108–138.



## Autumn Landscape with Maples at Eigenji

Edo period

Nukina Kaioku (1778–1863)

Hanging scroll; color on silk

H. 30.1 x W. 17.9 cm (11 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 7 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: "Kaioku Seihō, painted for the

enjoyment of the master of the Sūkeidō"; with the date, "winter month, year of Kishi [1833]"

SEALS: unclear, but may read "Kanhō" and "Kum'mo"

PUBLISHED: Yoshizawa Chū, "Autumn View of

Eigenji," *Kokka* 918 (September 1968), pp. 25–27.

This painting shimmers with vermilion and blue pigments, both blending beautifully with the brownish tint of the silk and the rich, bluish hues of black ink. Almost entirely composed of short, dry, rapidly brushed lines with a few dark wet strokes to pull them together, this small, intimate work effects the appearance of a rich silk brocade without the glitter of gold.

Deep in the quiet of a forested mountain the autumn season is at its height. Red maple leaves blanket the narrow gorge shaped by the mountain stream. Bridges over the stream, and small huts at the edge of the river and midway to the summit of the hill give evidence of human habitation, but the complete absence of human figures in this scene enhances the sense of tranquility.

Nukina Kaioku, the artist of this charming picture, was born to a family of archery instructors who served Lord Hachisuka on the island of Shikoku. Kaioku's early education prepared him to be a Confucian scholar, and he later spent some time in Kyoto as a teacher of Confucian studies. As was typical of young men of good family, he acquired considerable experience in several arts. His early education included lessons in the Kanō style of painting, and he later distinguished himself in both calligraphy and seal carving. He was regarded as one of the three best calligraphers of the late Edo period, together with Ichikawa Beian (1779–

1858) and Maki Ryōko (1777–1843). In his own lifetime, in fact, Kaioku was better known for his calligraphy and seal carving than for his painting. Following the ideology of the true literati, Kaioku traveled extensively in the Kansai area and to Kyūshū. He studied Nanga painting in Nagasaki with Tetsuō Somon (1791–1871), abbot of the Shuntokuji temple, whose teacher was Chiang Ta-lai, a Chinese businessman-painter who made frequent trips to Japan at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Legend also has it that after Kaioku saw a painting by the Ming artist, Ch'ien Ku (1508–about 1574), he was inspired to try the Nanga style. Kaioku also tried to add realism to his paintings, and he is said to have made many sketches of places he visited. In Nanao, a coastal town north of Kyoto, he was arrested for making sketches of the seashore. At that time, Japan was finally emerging from self-imposed isolation, and Kaioku's artistic intentions were evidently misconstrued by local officials who feared foreign invasions.

The subject of this landscape has been traditionally considered to be Eigenji, the principal temple of the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism, northeast of Kyoto, but this identification is still a matter of conjecture. When the painting was recently published, it was reproduced with another Kaioku painting belonging to the Tamura collection in Nishinomiya, near Kōbe.<sup>1</sup> The latter is not dated, but its colophon, written by Kaioku himself, states that the painting represents a scene from Eigenji, where he had viewed the autumn foliage some twenty-four or twenty-five years earlier. In this article, the Burke painting is identified as a work that Kaioku might have made on the trip to Eigenji that he nostalgically refers to in this colophon. The two paintings do not resemble one another, however, and no features of the Burke painting connect it to a particular location. Regretfully, nothing is known about the master of the Sūkeidō for whose pleasure Kaioku painted the picture.

1. Yoshizawa Chū, "Autumn View of Eigenji," *Kokka* 918 (September 1968), pp. 25–27.



癸巳冬月寫  
崇慶堂主賞鑒

海屋主筆





## Autumn Flowers

Edo period

Yamamoto Baiitsu (1783–1856)

Hanging scroll; color on silk

H. 115.8 x W. 40.9 cm (45 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.)SIGNATURE: "Baiitsu Ryō," dated to "Mid-autumn,  
year of Kibō [1843]"

SEALS: "Ryō In," "Baiitsu"

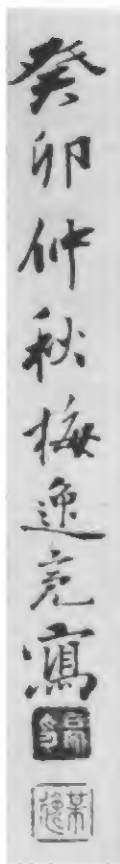
Yamamoto Baiitsu, who is best known for his elegant polychrome paintings of flowers and birds, was born in Nagoya, a town halfway between Edo and Kyoto. In his youth he studied painting with Chō Gesshō, a minor artist of the Shijō school. Most of Baiitsu's activities in his youth can be reconstructed through the writings of friends he met later in his life. While Baiitsu was still in his teens, he met Nakabayashi Chikutō (1778–1853),

a fellow Nagoyan and Baiitsu's senior by six years. According to the *Chikutō Garon*,<sup>1</sup> a collection of Chikutō's essays on painting published in 1812, these two young aspiring artists left Nagoya together for Kyoto in 1802 to study painting. In Kyoto, Baiitsu met many Nanga painters and sometimes collaborated with artists like Uragami Shunkin (no. 78) and Oda Kaisen (1785–1862). Baiitsu traveled throughout the Kansai area: in about 1815 he went to Edo, where he met many literati. One of them, the renowned poet Ōkubo Shibutsu (1767–1837), mentions Baiitsu frequently in his poems and essays, including the *Saiyū Shisō*. Baiitsu's life continued to fluctuate between the new and old capitals; he traveled, always in search of new ideas and new friends, until about 1854, when he finally returned to Nagoya, where he lived until his death.

Although his close friends were Nanga artists and his life-style remained true to Nanga ideals, Baiitsu's paintings retained traces of his early training in the Shijō school. A delicate realism in portraying nature is especially apparent in his paintings of flowers and birds. His style can be traced ultimately to paintings by late Ming artists such as Chou Chih-mien (active, 1580–1610), who was widely admired in Japan as a specialist in the flowers-and-birds genre.

Baiitsu's work demonstrates an unexpected variety within a limited subject matter. Although he used the same technique and style all his life, he was inventive, continually creating new flower-and-bird compositions. Here, Baiitsu employed soft, "boneless" washes of color to define large leaves contrasted against the sharp lines used for twigs and grasses. Light washes of colors added to graded ink create a cool, lyrical portrayal of autumn foliage.

1. Sakazaki Shizuka, ed., *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), pp. 146–164.





癸卯仲秋梅逸虎寫

## Kambun Beauty

Edo period (last half of the seventeenth century)

Hanging scroll; color on paper

H. 61.2 x W. 24.4 cm (24 1/8 x 9 5/8 in.)

PUBLISHED: Narazaki Muneshige, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), III, pl. 18.



“Kambun *bijin*” (beauties of the Kambun era, 1661–1672) is a generic term referring to paintings of beautiful women in solitary splendor against a neutral background. This painting of a single standing figure is typical of the type. The woman, tall and slender, her hair dressed in an elaborate style called *gosho mage* (“palace chignon”), covers her face in a coy gesture resembling a dance pose. Three layers of brilliantly designed robes accentuate her delicate beauty.

The term “Kambun Beauty” was not limited to paintings executed during the Kambun period, and this painting probably dates to a slightly later era. The designs on the outer garment include areas of tie-dyed pattern interspersed with a printed design, perhaps a new fashion that became popular after a sumptuary law of 1683 banned the use of overall tie-dyed fabrics.<sup>1</sup>

The Kambun beauty type of figure painting apparently developed from earlier group portraits of women of the pleasure quarters, as part of the overall trend in genre painting. Large compositions, such as the *Rakuchū-Rakugai* screens, in which the entire city of Kyoto and its environs are shown (see no. 45), were gradually replaced by smaller compositions focusing on indoor scenes within the pleasure quarters or theaters, subjects popular with the affluent merchant patrons of the arts.

Single figures of beautiful women may have been painted and mounted on hanging scrolls to be sold to these new patrons as mementos of their happy visits to the brothel district. The popular prints of courtesans and actors were mass-produced by artists of schools like the *Kaigetsudō* and *Torii*, who must have been inspired by paintings like this one.

1. Narazaki Muneshige, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), III (text), p. 26.



## Standing Woman

Edo period

Kaigetsudō Ando (active, late seventeenth to early eighteenth century)

Hanging scroll; color on paper

H. 100.4 x 42.3 cm (39<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 16<sup>11</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Nihon Giga Kaigetsudō"

SEALS: "Kan'yūshi" (?), "Ando"

EX COLLECTION: Frank E. Hart, Palm Beach, Florida

PUBLISHED: Donald Jenkins, *Ukiyo-e Prints and*

*Paintings: The Primitive Period, 1680–1745*

(Chicago, 1971), no. 102; *Japanese Paintings from*

*the Frank E. Hart Collection* (Palm Beach, Florida, 1963), no. 16.

The imposing figure of a courtesan completely fills this painting. Her boldly patterned kimono is accentuated by strong and sweeping ink outlines. Her body is arched in an S-curve as she lifts the hem of her kimono, and she glances over her shoulder, showing her costume and her full, white face to the best advantage. The painting has the quality of a fashion plate, and its appeal is frankly sensuous.

A colophon, brushed by an anonymous calligrapher on a *shikishi* (a paper square) is placed at the upper right corner. It is a familiar classical poem attributed to a monk of the Early Heian period, Sarumaru Dayū, one of the Thirty-six Immortal Poets. The poem is included in the *Sanjū-roku-nin Shū* (*Anthology of Poems by Thirty-six Poets*) and the *Hyakunin Isshu* (*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*):

Hearing the voice of the stag as he breaks  
through the red maple leaves  
deep in the mountain,  
Then, truly, autumn is sad.<sup>1</sup>

Since the numerous paintings and woodblock prints with the signature "Kaigetsudō" include an additional name or seal as well, Kaigetsudō is believed to have been a studio name. Tall, majestic women are the fa-





favorite subjects of paintings and prints by Ando and his followers. All Kaigetsudō courtesans are remarkably similar in theme and style. A woman stands alone adjusting her hair or looking back over her shoulder. The faces are stereotypes, seldom revealing individuality or emotion. The costumes reflect popular fashions in textile designs and are strongly outlined in rhythmic curves that set off the large, clearly defined patterns and lively color contrasts. The basic costume design—the position of the sleeves, the shape of the obi, and the flare of the lower hem—are often faithfully repeated on many works, varied only by different textile patterns. Such paintings were mass-produced, and the same shop made even cheaper monochromatic versions of the painting designs in woodcuts.

Few facts are known about the lives of the artists who signed “Kaigetsudō” on these large portrayals of courtesans. Various signatures and seals on paintings and prints differentiate six Kaigetsudō artists: Ando, Anchi, Dohan, Doshin, Doshu, and Doshū. Ando is generally credited with founding the Kaigetsudō studio. This painting includes the “Kaigetsudō” signature, a seal reading “Ando,” and another seal frequently found with the latter, which can be deciphered as “Kan’yūshi.”

Kaigetsudō Ando is said to have sold his pictures to visitors at Yoshiwara. His real name was Okazaki (or Okazawa) Genshichi, and he is said to have been introduced into the inner circle of women serving the Tokugawa government. He seems to have been implicated in a scandal involving a love affair between one of these women and a Kabuki actor—a relationship that was outlawed as a serious criminal offense—and he was ordered into exile in 1714. A recent investigation of art objects preserved in the remote islands south of Tokyo, has unearthed some paintings by this artist. Ando was apparently exiled to one of the islands, either to Niihima or Ōshima, in the same area where another artist, Hanabusa Itchō, lived in exile from 1698 to 1709<sup>2</sup> (see no. 89). It is generally assumed that this incident ended Ando’s career, and that his shop was continued by his pupils who signed their names “Kaigetsudō Matsuyō” (“the last leaf of Kaigetsudō”).

While nothing is known about Ando’s early artistic training, the few extant paintings by this artist suggest that he was trained in a fairly orthodox school. A handscroll in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,<sup>3</sup> exhibits his

familiarity with the Kanō style and an interest in Nanga, which was then emerging as a new style. Ando’s solitary courtesans mark the height of the development of a style of figure painting that began in the early seventeenth century. He continued a tradition that had been established by anonymous painters of the Kan’ei (1624–1643) and Kambun (1661–1672) eras and that was subsequently refined by Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–1694). Kaigetsudō’s women, however, seem prouder of their profession than their older sisters.

The strong ink outlines distinctive to Kaigetsudō’s paintings and prints are sometimes attributed to the practice Ando had gained as a designer of votive tablets (*ema*). Since these tablets are hung high, near the eaves of temples and shrines, they required clear outlines. It is noteworthy, however, that the works of Kaigetsudō’s contemporaries, Torii Kiyonobu (1664–1729), Torii Kiyomasu (active, 1694–1716), and Okumura Masanobu (1686–1764), all feature strong lines and bold fabric patterns. Torii Kiyonobu is supposed to have originated a new style of actor print in which ink lines are exaggerated to express dramatic actions on stage. When woodblock printing was in its early stages of development and colors were added by hand to designs impressed in ink, artists relied solely upon ink lines for expression. The vitality and dramatic quality of Kaigetsudō’s outlines become even more effective when his work is reproduced in ink monochrome prints. The absence of reliable records concerning the lives and training of these artists makes it difficult to determine whether the style derived from traditional painting or early prints. It is curious that Ando’s successors, and not Ando himself, should have made woodblock prints of these women, since it may have been the medium that originally inspired their master to create his magnificent portrayals in paintings.

1. Donald Jenkins, *Ukiyo-e Prints and Paintings: The Primitive Period, 1680–1745* (Chicago, 1971), no. 102; H. H. Honda, *One Hundred Poems from One Hundred Poets* (Tokyo, 1957), p. 5. This poem is also included in the *Kokin Waka Shū* (*The Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems*), where it is identified as the work of an anonymous poet. See H. H. Honda, *The Kokin Waka Shū: The Tenth-century Anthology Edited by the Imperial Edict* (Tokyo, 1970), poem no. 215.
2. Kobayashi Tadashi, “The Life of Hanabusa Itchō,” *Kokka* 920 (November 1968), p. 46.
3. Narazaki Muneshige, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), III, pls. 28, 29.





## Taking Shelter from Rain

Edo period

Hanabusa Itchō (1652–1724)

Six-fold screen; color and ink on paper

W. 316 x H. 121.2 cm (124½ x 47¾ in.)

SIGNATURE: "Hanabusa Itchō"

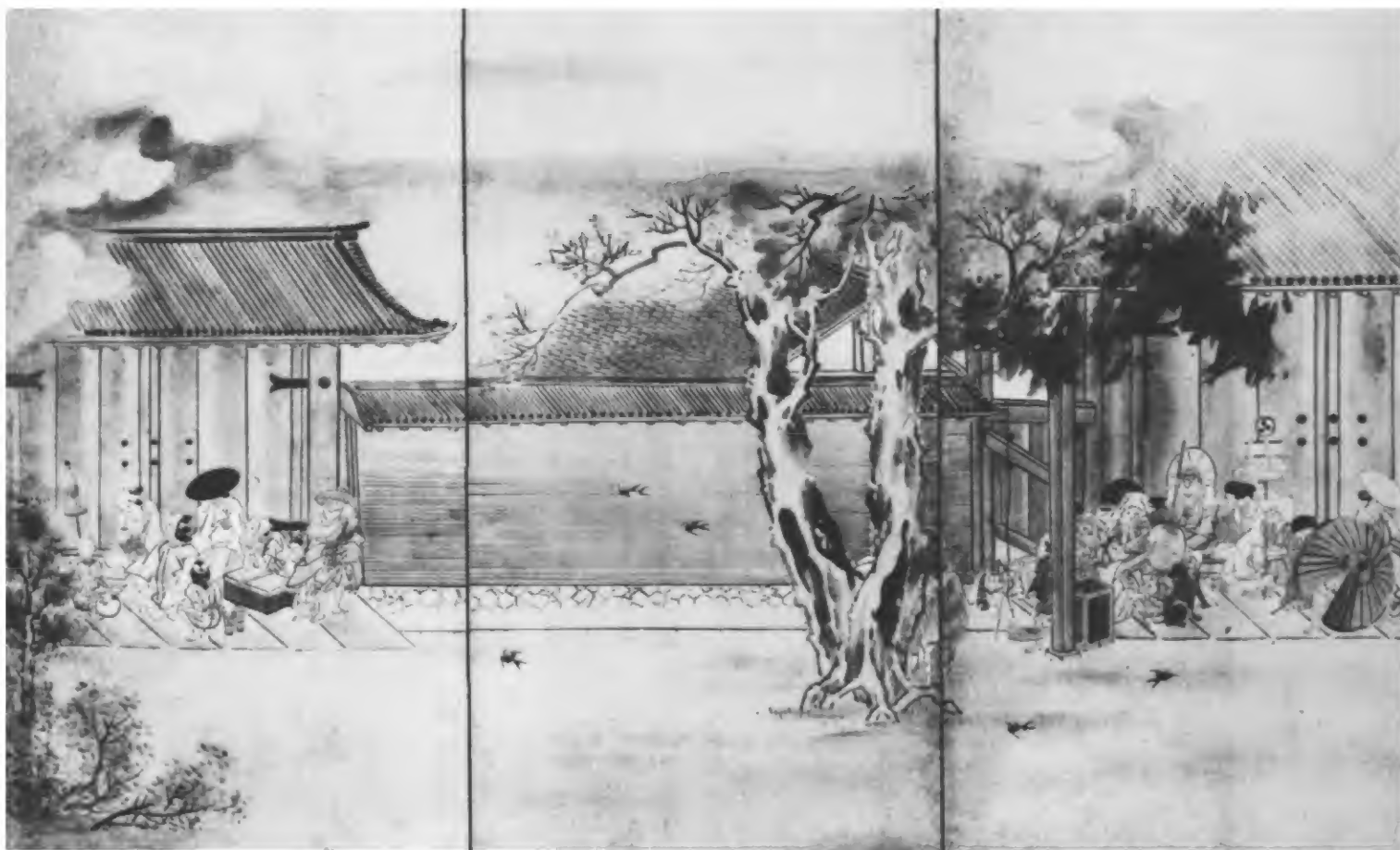
SEALS: "Shuzai San-un Senseki Kan," "Ai Moko"

PUBLISHED: Miyeko Murase, *Byōbu: Japanese Screens from New York Collections* (New York, 1971), no.

26; Tsuji Nobuo, "Taking Shelter from Rain," *Kokka*

920 (November 1968), p. 35.

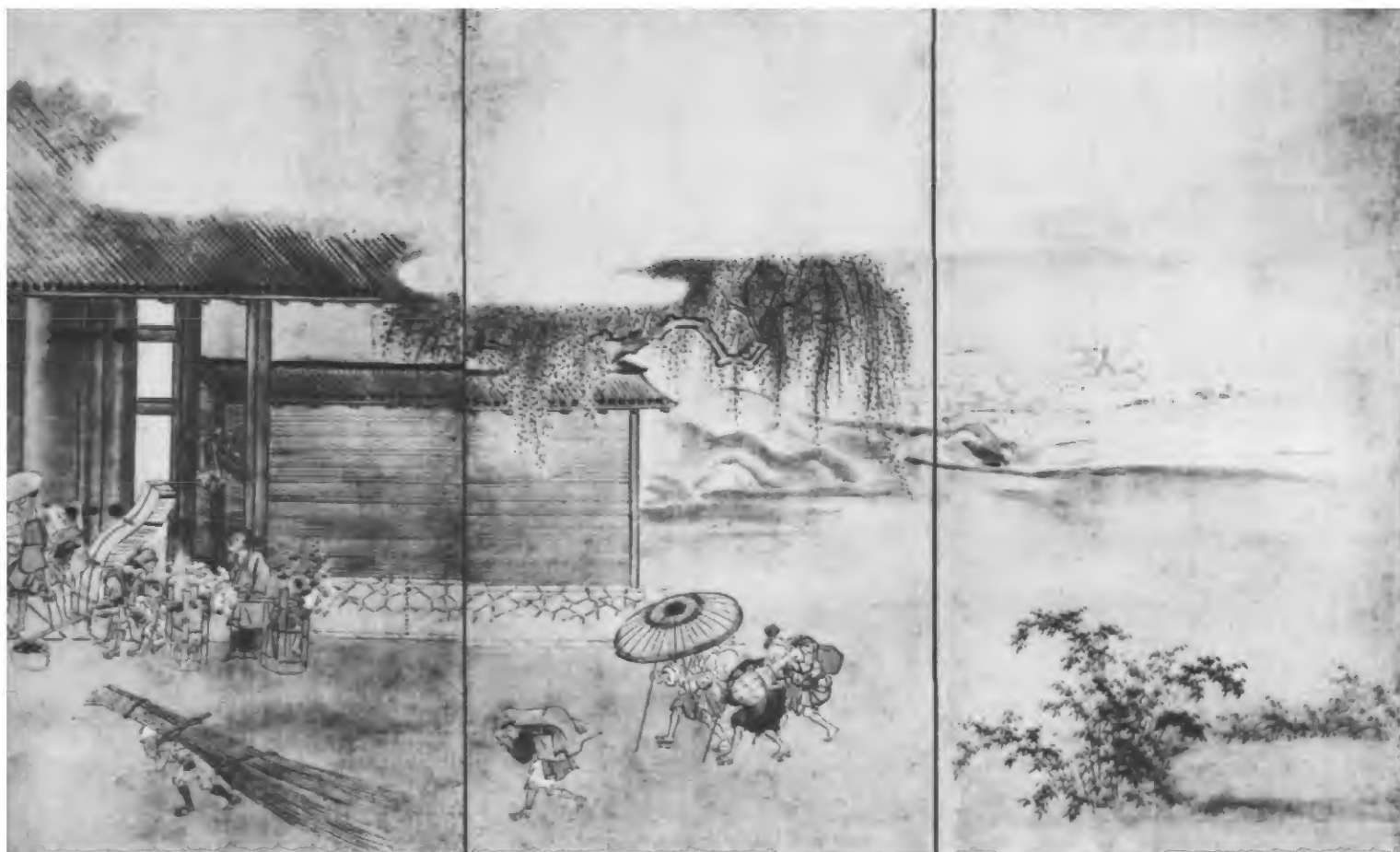
A group of passersby takes shelter from a sudden downpour. Heavy clouds envelop the rooftops, while the leaves of trees tremble in the wind. At the right a creek is already flooding, and wild grasses bend, heavy with moisture. Four men and a bamboo vendor rush toward the wide-eaved gate of a large estate. There, men and women of different classes and trades are already huddled together under the roof—a warrior, pilgrims, and a lion-dance performer, as well as a flower vendor and other tradesmen. A child hangs upside down from a beam; he alone seems unconcerned with the inconvenience of the weather. At the smaller gate on the left, more men and women cluster together. Swallows flutter around the large tree, as if agitated by

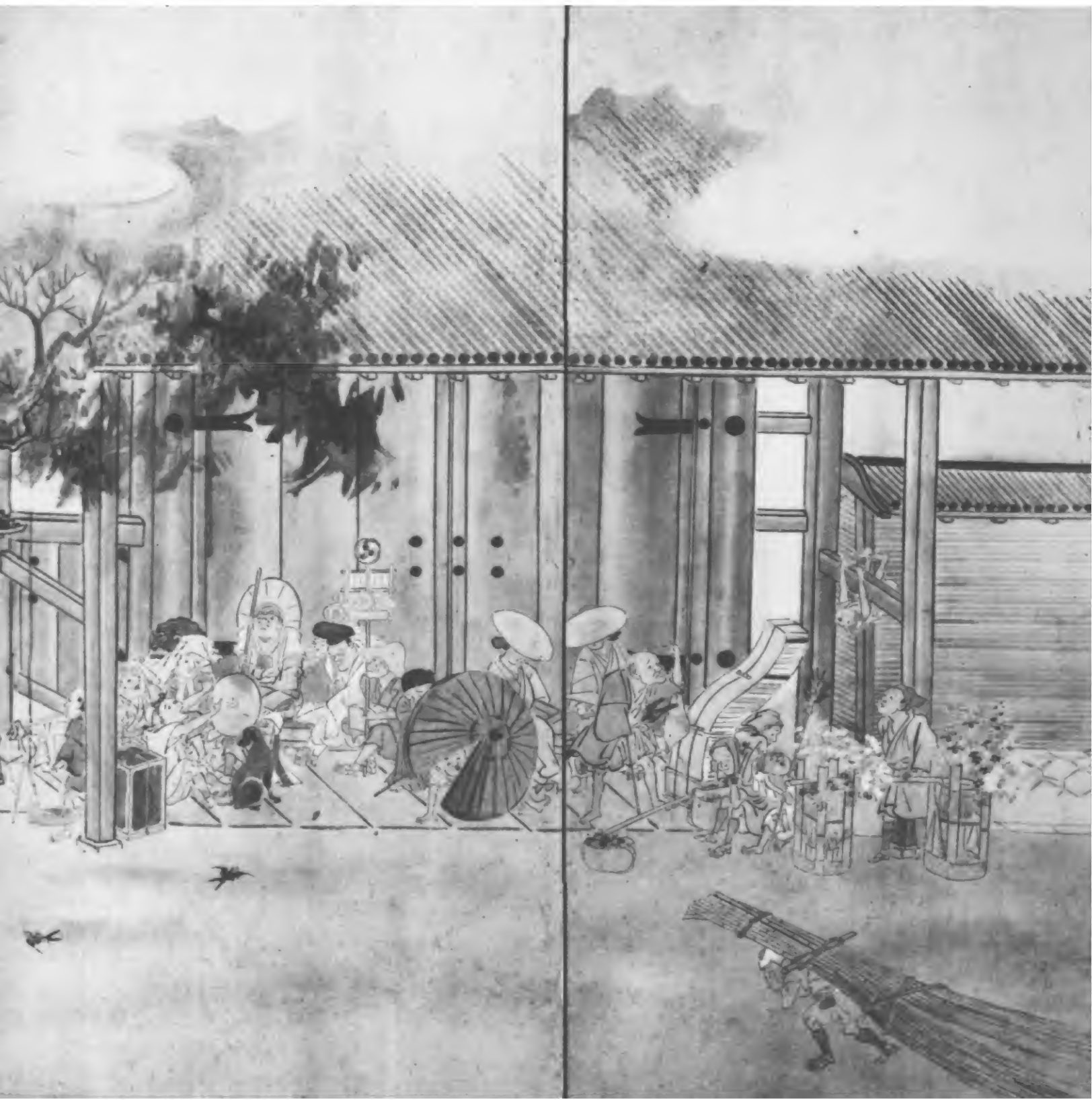


the storm. Light washes of color and fluid brush strokes in soft dark ink convey the wetness and sudden cooling of the atmosphere.

Hanabusa Itchō is one of many Edo painters whose art or life-style did not follow the strict policies of the feudal government, and who, like others, spent some years in tragic exile. Much of our knowledge of his life depends on materials energetically researched by the novelist and Ukiyo-e painter Santō Kyōden (see no. 93) and his younger brother, Kyōzan (1769–1858), and collected under the titles: the *Hanabusa Itchō Den*<sup>1</sup> and *Itchō Ruteki Kō*.<sup>2</sup> However, very little research has been done by modern scholars, except for an unfinished study by Kobayashi in 1968,<sup>3</sup> so that many phases

of Itchō's life, especially from ages twenty to forty, still remain a mixture of facts and hearsay. Kobayashi's research shows that Itchō was the son of Taga Hakuan, a physician in Kyoto. As a young boy, in 1659 or 1666, Itchō accompanied his parents in their move to Edo, where he is said to have studied painting with Kanō Yasunobu (1618–1685), the leading Kanō artist of his time. Itchō's interest soon seems to have diverged from the academism of the Kanō school, however. He later stated in his own essay, the *Shiki-e Batsu*,<sup>4</sup> that he wanted to emulate the popularity of the two most successful Ukiyo-e painters, Iwasa Matabei (1578–1650) and Hishikawa Moronobu (1618–1694), who were active slightly before his time. Even later, he occasionally





signed his works with the words, “after the Moronobu manner.” Unfortunately, it is not known when he made this switch to another aesthetic form; he neglects to mention it in his writings, and a pitifully meager number of paintings is definitely attributed to his early period. According to one source, Itchō used the name “Waō” among many others.<sup>5</sup> It is identical in sound and spelling, except for the second character, “ō,” with the name of a Ukiyo-e painter, Hishikawa Waō, who is known for his portraits of beautiful women, but there is only a handful of his paintings. Perhaps further research will show that this Ukiyo-e painter Waō was the young Itchō.

Sometime in his late twenties, Itchō became interested in haiku and received instructions from Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694), who is generally regarded as the greatest haiku poet. Itchō also made the acquaintance of and instructed in painting Enomoto Kikaku (1661–1707), perhaps the most able pupil of Bashō. Three of his haiku were included in the *Minashi Guri*, a collection of poems edited by Kikaku and published in 1683. In the meantime, Itchō seems to have become involved with corrupt officials, was arrested in 1698, and sent into exile in Miyake-jima, an island south of Edo, where he spent twelve years before his release. After his return to Edo, Itchō adopted a new name, probably to allude to his new life, signing most of his paintings “Hanabusa Itchō.”

This screen is one of the post-exile works. Itchō aspired to equal, or even to surpass the leading Ukiyo-e painters, whose portrayals of the pleasure quarters and their beautiful women were the most popular art of the middle-class society. Indeed, some of his paintings glorify the courtesans, or show the escapades of rich youths in the red-lantern districts. However, his basic attitude toward his subjects differs from that of Moronobu and other Ukiyo-e artists. Itchō’s genuine interest was in the life of common people pursuing daily activities. He seems to have viewed the subject of taking common shelter as symbolic of the summer season. A long handscroll by him in the Honolulu Academy of Art depicts typical activities performed during the calendar year, which includes a scene almost identical to this one illustrating the month of June. Itchō painted the theme many times, on hanging scrolls, handscrolls, and screens. Perhaps the idea of people of different classes and occupations brought together by an unex-

pected event like a summer shower appealed to the Japanese artists working under a severely stratified feudal society. Later, admirers of Itchō, like Kō Sūkoku (1737–1811) and Hokuba (1771–1844), copied this scene in their works. Itchō occasionally made designs for lacquer and metal workers, including Yamada Jōga (late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries) and Yokoya Sōmin (1670?–1733). Perhaps this was one of such designs: a simplified version of this scene is depicted on a tiny lacquered medicine box, or *inrō*, in the Charles Greenfield collection.<sup>6</sup>

1. This biography of Itchō is dated to 1804 and is attributed to Santō Kyōden. It is included in the *Kinsei Kiseki Kō*, Nihon Zuihitsu Taisei, ed., Nihon Zuihitsu Taisei Henshū-bu, II/3 (Tokyo, 1928), pp. 774–778; many other documentary materials on Itchō are included in an article by Kobayashi Tadashi, “Kenkyū Shiryō: Itchō Kankei Shiryō,” *Kokka* 920 (November 1968), pp. 47–54.
2. Iwamoto Sashichi and Iwamoto Goichi, eds., *Zoku Enseki Jisshu* (Tokyo, 1908), I, pp. 284–298.
3. Kobayashi Tadashi, “Life of Hanabusa Itchō,” *Kokka* 920 (November 1968), pp. 5–20.
4. Kobayashi, “Kenkyū Shiryō,” pp. 50–51.
5. This remark is found in an anonymous essay, “Edo Masago Rokujū Jō”; see Iwamoto Sashichi and Iwamoto Goichi, eds., *Enseki Jisshu* (Tokyo, 1907), I, pp. 118–119.
6. Harold P. Stern, *The Magnificent Three: Lacquer, Netsuke, and Tsuba—Selections from the Collection of Charles A. Greenfield* (New York, 1972), no. 98.



## Beauty on a Verandah Enjoying a Cool Summer Evening

Edo period

Ogawa Haritsu (1663–1747)

Hanging scroll; color on silk

W. 54.4 x H. 39 cm (21<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

SIGNATURE: "Ukanshi Ritsuō, aged seventy-nine  
[1741]"

SEAL: "Fuan" (?)

EX COLLECTION: Frank E. Hart, Palm Beach, Florida

PUBLISHED: *Japanese Paintings from the Frank E.*

*Hart Collection* (Palm Beach, Florida, 1963), no. 20.

A young woman fans herself as she relaxes alone on the verandah of a rustic house, trying to catch the breeze that comes from the direction of a stream winding through the garden. She is scantily dressed, as though she has just come from her evening bath, and her kimono, light and transparent as dragonfly wings, allows the upper part of her body and a red petticoat to show through. The artist seems to have used the

theme as an excuse to depict a lovely woman whose smooth, white skin is tantalizingly bare beneath the delicate floral patterns of her robe. The subject was a favorite among Ukiyo-e painters, and a number of similar compositions by different artists exist.

Before the seventeenth century, Japanese painters did not recognize the subject of people at rest as appropriate for the artist's work. Genre paintings of earlier periods usually portray occupations or extraordinary events in a citizen's life, such as seasonal festivals or special outings. A painting in the Asō collection by Kusumi Morikage (active, late seventeenth century) showing a farmer's family quietly enjoying a cool breeze after the evening bath may be the earliest known Japanese painting depicting country folk at rest in their most familiar settings. The Ukiyo-e artists occasionally rejected the feverish activities at the theater and pleasure quarters as subject matter in favor of the intimate and ordinary features of a person's life. Such scenes of domestic peace illuminate the human, more private aspect of the courtesan.

The artist of this charming painting, Ogawa Haritsu, is better known in the history of Japanese art as an innovative designer of lacquerwares. He is credited with the introduction of bone, ivory, pewter, and porcelain into inlay lacquer decoration. A versatile and talented man, he also distinguished himself as a painter and a printmaker. Moreover, he was respected as a master of the seventeen-syllable haiku and was friendly with other leading masters of this literary form, including Bashō, Kikaku, and Ransetsu. His name, "Haritsu," suggests his deep commitment to this art form, since it means "a battered bamboo hat," the type worn by travelers. Like Bashō and many other haiku poets, Haritsu traveled extensively. He once served the lord of Tsugaru province (modern Aomori prefecture) at the northern tip of Honshū Island, producing many lacquer designs. He is said to have studied painting with Ogata Kōrin and his younger brother Kenzan (nos. 54–56), and some of his paintings and lacquer designs indeed reflect a familiarity with works by Rimpa artists.









## The Noh Dance *Okina* (also known as *Shiki Samba*)

Edo period

Toriyama Sekien (1712–1788)

Triptych of hanging scrolls; color on paper

Each scroll, H. 87.3 x W. 27.2 cm (34 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.)

SIGNATURE: "Sekien, aged seventy [1781]," on all scrolls

SEAL: "Sekisō Tsukioka no In" on all scrolls

EX COLLECTION: Frank E. Hart, Palm Beach, Florida

PUBLISHED: Narazaki Muneshige, ed., *Zaigai Hibō: Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), III, pls. 50–52; Martie W. Young and Robert J. Smith, *Japanese Painters of the Floating World* (Ithaca, New York, 1966), no. 46; *Japanese Paintings from the Frank E. Hart Collection* (Palm Beach, Florida, 1963), no. 46.

The three dancers shown on the triptych are performers in the slow-moving Noh dance drama called the "*Okina*," sometimes also known as the "*Shiki Samba*."<sup>1</sup> *Okina*, which means "old man," is unique in the Noh repertory, because it is performed before a formal program begins. A dance without specific narrative con-

tent, it is reserved for special occasions, such as New Year festivities and ceremonies to pray for the peace and prosperity of the nation or to purify the place of celebration at a Shinto shrine.

The protagonist (the *shite*) is the old man, Okina, who is in the center of the triptych and wears a white mask. His light brown overblouse, or *kariginu*, is decorated with a tortoise-shell pattern, a symbol of longevity and happiness. The same longevity symbolism applies to the cranes and tortoises decorating the costumes worn by two other dancers. The figure without a mask to the right of Okina is a young man, but his name is Senzai, meaning "a thousand years of age," and his role in this dance is that of a *tsure*, or companion to the *shite*. A black mask and bells held in the right hand of the dancer standing at the left side of Okina identify him as Sambasō, meaning "the third old man."

Small patches of bright red and gold on the painted fans held by the two dancers enliven the subdued color scheme. Strong ink outlines defining the dancers' costumes and their neatly organized folds suggest the technique of printmaking; Toriyama Sekien illustrated many books with woodblock prints.

As a young man, Sekien studied painting with Kanō Shūshin (1660–1728) and Kanō Gyokuen. Like many other serious young artists of his time, he was also interested in Chinese realism of the Ming and Ch'ing manner, styles that were pursued more vigorously by contemporary Nanga artists. His work as a print designer, however, was limited to illustrations for printed books; he did not make single-sheet prints. Sekien is remembered less as a creator of popular prints and paintings than as a master of broad experience, an artist whose training in the orthodox Kanō school contributed to the enrichment of the art of printmaking. Indeed, Sekien's most significant contribution to Ukiyo-e lies in his role as the teacher of such promising young artists as Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806) and Eishōsai Chōki (late eighteenth century).



1. Nogami Toyochirō, *Kaichū Yōkyoku Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1935), I, pp. 1–10.



## Yoshiwara in Three Seasons

Edo period

Hosoda Eishi (1756–1815)

Triptych of hanging scrolls; color on silk

Each scroll, H. 82.4 x W. 30.2 cm (32<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.)

Colophon by Ōta Nampo (1749–1823) on each scroll,  
with his signature, “Shokusan-jin”

SIGNATURE: “Chōbunsai Eishi” on each scroll

SEAL: “Eishi” on each scroll

EX COLLECTION: Frank E. Hart, Palm Beach, Florida

PUBLISHED: *Japanese Paintings from the Frank E.*

*Hart Collection* (Palm Beach, Florida, 1963), nos.

53–55.

This triptych represents Yoshiwara, the brothel district of Edo, and its neighboring areas, in three different seasons of the year. In the center scroll, a courtesan proudly displays her beauty before her only rival: cherry blossoms, the ultimate symbol of spring in Japan and especially at Yoshiwara. To the left the route to the pleasure quarters appears at its most enchanting, illuminated by the clear moon of autumn. Finally, in the right scroll the adventure of a hazardous journey through winter snow heightens the anticipation of pleasure at the end of the road.

The inscriptions on the scrolls are seasonal poems by Shokusan-jin, the most popular satirical poet of his time.<sup>1</sup> The poem on the center scroll reads:

Beside the flowering cherries of Nakano-chō  
Not a single tree from the deep mountain valleys.<sup>2</sup>

Nakano-chō was the center of the Yoshiwara district. After cherry trees were planted there in 1749, they were often the theme of poems on Yoshiwara. The poem alludes to the unsurpassed beauty of the district's women.

After Yoshiwara was relocated away from the center of the city in 1657, the river Ōkawa was the most commonly used route to and from the pleasure quarters.<sup>3</sup> A large pine tree called Shubi no Matsu (the Pine of Fate), which stood on the bank of the river, became a landmark for customers, both those courting success





and those nursing failure. The poem on the scroll of autumn describes the major elements in the painting:

On the evening tide,  
Rowing the boat with oars made of the Katsura  
branch growing on the moon,  
Now I look at the Pine of Fate, wishing for luck.

Similarly, the poem on the winter scroll accurately describes the scene depicted:

Heavy snow is piled on the lintel of the gate to the  
Mimeguri Shrine.  
Yoshiwara is actually near,  
But it seems very far in this snow.

The family background of Hosoda Eishi was unusual among Ukiyo-e artists, who were usually from the middle classes. He was born into a respected warrior family that included a number of high-ranking government officials. Eishi is believed to have studied painting with a leading Kanō master, Michinobu (1730–1790), who was also known as Eisen-in. Sometime during the 1780s, after Eishi had given three years of service to the tenth shogun Ieharu (r. 1760–1786), he switched his artistic affiliations to the less academic style of Ukiyo-e, specializing in paintings and woodblock prints of courtesans.

The two landscapes here are somewhat tame depictions of this genre, but the figure of the courtesan ranks among the best of his paintings of elegant women from the pleasure quarters. A subdued palette of gray and black unifies the three scrolls. The only bright notes are found in the gold design of carps on the courtesan's black robe and a glimpse of a red obi tied in front. The same quiet palette is characteristic of Eishi's prints of beautiful courtesans, and it distinguishes them from the more ornate works of his contemporaries. His early training in the Kanō school or his aristocratic origin may have helped him to develop a personal standard of color harmony.

Shokusan-jin, poet and calligrapher of the colophons, was the popular pen name of Ōta Nampo. Although he was born to a minor, impoverished warrior family in Edo, Nampo distinguished himself as a child prodigy in literature. In his youth, he tried many different literary forms. At eighteen, he published books of Chinese-style poetry, and while he was still in his teens, he published a collection of *kyōka* ("satirical

poems") many of which parodied classical poetry. Since these biting, often vulgar verses quickly caught the imagination of the townsfolk, Nampo is credited with starting a *kyōka* craze in Edo.

Through poetry, Nampo drew close to merchants, craftsmen, and eventually to Yoshiwara and Ukiyo-e artists. He apparently developed a strong interest in Ukiyo-e, and through friendships with artists he became knowledgeable about this art form. At least some portions of the first Japanese essay on this new type of painting, the *Ukiyo-e Ruikō*,<sup>4</sup> are attributed to him. Nampo's friendship with Eishi is documented by a number of literary references, including other colophons he wrote on Eishi's paintings. A portrait of Nampo was painted by Eishi in 1814 and is now in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum.<sup>5</sup>

For several reasons, our triptych may be dated to late in Eishi's career. He seems to have been more seriously affected than other Ukiyo-e artists by the sumptuary law passed during the 1790s banning the use of red pigments for prints. Subsequently, Eishi's paintings were executed primarily in the grays, greens, and purples seen here. While Eishi's earlier beauties were ethereal and elegant, this courtesan, although swathed in a voluminous kimono, has nevertheless a solid human presence beneath the layers of silk. Such a change in Eishi's style may be attributable to the influence of Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), Eishi's enormously popular contemporary. Although Eishi throughout his career seems to have used a fluid *gyōsho* (running script) signature on the prints he designed, the signature on each of these scrolls is written in a careful *kaisho* (regular script), which is a feature of his later paintings. Finally, Nampo is believed to have adopted the name Shokusan-jin only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, around 1802, and the calligraphic style of the colophons also points to Nampo's late style. Thus the triptych may be dated to the last dozen years of Eishi's life.

It is possible that Eishi painted a pair of paintings very similar to two of the scrolls in this triptych, again with colophons by Nampo. A sketch of a courtesan in the John Powers collection, which bears close resemblance to the central scroll in the Burke set, also includes an identical inscription by Nampo.<sup>6</sup> An anthology of Nampo's poems, the *Senkō Banshi*, includes a poem inspired by a painting that is lost or remains unrecognized. A short title preceding the verse describes





the painting as "*The Shubi no Matsu under the Moon with a Boat Nearby*."<sup>7</sup> The poem is identical to the one inscribed on the autumn scroll here, except that it begins with the word *age shio*, meaning "the oncoming tide," rather than *yū shio*, the "evening tide." The "lost" painting may also have been painted by Eishi, as a part of a set that included the sketch in the Powers collection.

1. For this novelist, see Hamada Giichirō, *Ōta Nampo*, Jimbutsu Sōsho, vol. CII, ed. Nihon Rekishi Gakkai (Tokyo, 1963); Tamabayashi Haruo, *Shokusan-jin no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1944).
2. John Rosenfield and Shūjirō Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art: Selections from the Kimiko and John Powers Collection* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), no. 149.
3. For a description of customs and geography of Yoshiwara, see Mitani Kazuma, *Edo Yoshiwara Zushū* (Tokyo, 1973).
4. Sakazaki Shizuka, ed., *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), pp. 1376–1437.
5. Yoshida Seiichi and Hamada Giichirō, *Senryū Shū, Kyōka Shū*, Koten Nihon Bungaku Zenshū, vol. XXXIII (Tokyo, 1967), frontispiece.
6. Rosenfield and Shimada, *Traditions of Japanese Art*, no. 149.
7. Mukasa San, ed., *Ōta Nampo Shū* (Tokyo, 1928), p. 269.



## A Courtesan and Her Attendants under a Willow Tree

Edo period

Unchō (active, late eighteenth century)

Hanging scroll; color on silk

H. 92.7 x W. 34 cm (36½ x 13⅜ in.)

Colophons by Santō Kyōden (1761–1816) and

Takizawa Bakin (1767–1848)

SIGNATURE: “Unchō”; with the date, “early winter,  
year of dragon, eighth year of the Kansei era [1796]”

SEAL: a *kaō* (cipher)

PUBLISHED: Narazaki Muneshige, ed., *Zaigai Hibō:*

*Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo,

1969), III, pl. 64; Narazaki Muneshige, “Beautiful

Women under a Willow Tree,” *Kokka* 894

(September 1966), p. 34.

An *oiran*, or “high-class courtesan,” and her two attendants saunter past the willow tree of Ōmon, the main gate to Yoshiwara. The coiffeurs, hair ornaments, and beautiful textile patterns of the kimono are described with unusual care. While the overall color scheme is kept to subtle shades, a bright red obi worn by the *kamuro* (“young girl attendant”) and the flicker of color on the linings of undergarments attract the eye. The effect is complemented by touches of shiny lacquer used on their pitch black hair, clothing, and wooden clogs.

In spite of the unusually high quality of this work, we know nothing about the artist. No literary document supporting the existence of Unchō has yet been found. This painting is the only known testimony to this otherwise entirely forgotten artist. Because both names have the same suffix, Unchō, whose name consists of characters meaning “cloud” (*un*) and “tide” (*chō*), may have been associated with Katsukawa Shunchō (active, late eighteenth century), whose name means “spring (*shun*) tide.” Shunchō was, in turn, a pupil of Katsukawa Shunshō (1726–1792), who is known chiefly for his dramatic prints of Kabuki actors.



A possible link between Unchō and Shunshō is also suggested by the fact that both artists used as a seal a *kaō*, a special kind of stylized cipher that was rarely used by Ukiyo-e artists.

However, there is no apparent stylistic connection between this painting and the work of Shunshō. The rather short stature of these women and their plump faces and full hair styles, which exaggerate the swell of the side locks, point instead to the style of the print artist Kitao Shigemasa (1739–1820). Santō Kyōden, one of the two novelists who wrote colophons on this painting, is known to have been friendly with Shigemasa, and Unchō may also have been associated with Shigemasa and even influenced by him.

In sharp contrast to the anonymity of the painter, the lives of the two colophon writers, both of whom were popular novelists of their time, are well documented. Santō Kyōden,<sup>1</sup> the elder of the two, was a printmaker before 1790, when he turned to a full-time writing career. Kyōden made prints under the pseudonym Kitao Masanobu. Since his works reflect the style of his teacher, Shigemasa, certain similarities are noticeable between the prints made by the youthful Kyōden and this painting by Unchō.

Kyōden's career demonstrates the kind of collaboration that existed between writers and book illustrators in the Edo period. His own novels were illustrated with woodblock prints, so Kyōden maintained close ties with printmakers even after he was no longer a designer himself. His interest and competence in printmaking must have been considerable, for he advised illustrators and was qualified to write a commentary to an essay on Ukiyo-e, the *Ukiyo-e Ruikō*.<sup>2</sup>

The other colophon writer, Kyōden's pupil Takizawa Bakin,<sup>3</sup> became even more famous than his teacher as a novelist. A prolific writer, Bakin is often regarded as the first professional writer of Japan. Because his books were illustrated with woodblock prints, Bakin, too, maintained contacts with Ukiyo-e artists. Possibly Unchō designed illustrations for books by the authors, and he may have known them through his connection with Shigemasa.

Each of the colophons consists of a short preface, a satirical poem, a signature, and a seal. Kyōden's colophon reads:

Anyone may break a branch of the willow by the  
roadside or flowers inside the fence.  
Even monk Saigyō has not yet seen Yoshiwara  
in the season of flowers.

Santō Kyōden

Saigyō (1118–about 1190) was a promising young warrior, but he renounced military life and became a wandering monk-poet. An exchange of poems between Saigyō, as a mendicant, and a courtesan known as Eguchi no Kimi (Princess of Eguchi), was dramatized in a Noh play, *Eguchi*,<sup>4</sup> which recognizes a sacred element even in the most profane of human professions, that of prostitution. Eguchi no Kimi later came to be regarded as an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra (Fugen Bosatsu, in Japanese), and Saigyō became symbolic of religious sanction for Yoshiwara and its women.

Bakin's colophon reads:

The house of Yoshiwara is north of Kinryūzan;  
thus the courtesan often thinks of the  
achievements of the Thousand-armed Kannon.  
Her body lies on three layers of quilts,  
touching the bodies of ten thousand customers.  
Yet, lice never clings to the collars of wealthy men.  
Such is the disposition of a woman of Yoshiwara.

Kyokutei Bakin

Kinryūzan, mentioned in Bakin's poem, is another name for Sensōji, which is popularly known as the Asakusa Kannon temple. Asakusa is a section of Tokyo near the old Yoshiwara district, and the principal deity of the temple is Kannon Bosatsu. The number of quilts given a customer at Yoshiwara depended on the degree of his wealth, and three quilts were usually reserved for an affluent and frequent customer.<sup>5</sup>

Bakin's reference to three quilts in the preface to his own poem is interesting testimony to the collaboration

that then existed among the cognoscenti of Yoshiwara. Another literary figure, Ōta Nampo, better known as Shokusan-jin (see no. 92),<sup>6</sup> was associated with this group, and in 1784 he wrote a long colophon for a set of paintings of courtesans by Kyōden in which he stated a wish for three layers of quilts at Yoshiwara.<sup>7</sup>

1. Wolfgang Schamoni, *Die Sharebon Santō Kyōden's und ihre Literaturegeschichtliche Stellung* (Bonn, 1970).

2. Sakazaki Shizuka, ed., *Nihon Gadan Taikan* (Tokyo, 1917), pp. 1376-1437.

3. Leon M. Zolbrod, *Takizawa Bakin* (New York, 1967).

4. For an English translation of this play, see The Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, ed., *Japanese Nob Drama* (Tokyo, 1955), I, pp. 109-124.

5. Mitani Kazuma, *Edo Yoshiwara Zushū* (Tokyo, 1973).

6. Hamada Güichirō, *Ōta Nampo*, Jimbutsu Sōsho, vol. CII, ed. Nihon Rekishi Gakkai (Tokyo, 1963); Tamabayashi Haruo, *Shokusan-jin no Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1944).

7. Mukasa San, ed., *Ōta Nampo Shū* (Tokyo, 1928), pp. 106-107. In the same colophon, he also mentions the cherry blossoms of Nakano-chō and the trees of deep mountains (see no. 92).





## 94

### Summer Party on the Bank of the Kamo River

Edo period

Utagawa Toyohiro (1773–1828)

Hanging scroll; color on silk

W. 73.9 x H. 50 cm (29 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 19 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.)

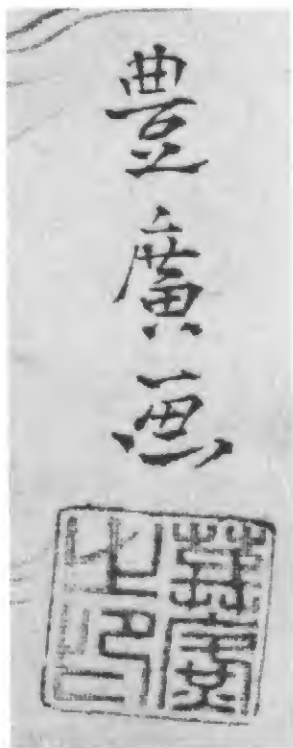
SIGNATURE: "Toyohiro"

SEAL: "Toyohiro no In"

PUBLISHED: Martie W. Young and Robert J. Smith,  
*Japanese Painters of the Floating World* (Ithaca,  
New York, 1966), no. 62.

Many restaurants line the west bank of the Kamo River in Kyoto where it intersects Shijō Street in the center of town. In the evening, people who cross Shijō Bridge pause to watch the restaurant lights flickering on the water and to listen to the faint echo of voices mingling with the clatter of dishes. Anyone who has been to Kyoto during the summer season feels nostalgia and a pang of envy at this sight, unchanged for many years. Ever since the Edo period these restaurants have put platforms over the river during summer months so that guests can enjoy their evening meals outdoors.

Kyoto citizens enjoying an evening by the Kamo became a favorite subject with which to represent the summer season: it was frequently painted by artists of



the Ukiyo-e and Shijō schools: one prominent member of the Shijō school, Komai Ki, copied a handscroll by Maruyama Ōkyo, which depicts the four seasons of the year and includes this scene (no. 63).

In this painting, a young gentleman is the guest at a restaurant called the Shijō-ya. Before him are trays of food and an ashtray with the restaurant's name. The young man has just grasped the wrist of one of the maids, creating a ripple of amused agitation among the ladies. The evening darkness is pierced by three lanterns and the white-faced beauty of tall women. The basically cool palette is punctuated by a bright red in the sashes worn by the geisha and in the aprons worn by the maids. The women and even the man have small, narrow faces with pointed chins that are characteristic of Toyohiro's work. An identical scene, apparently modeled after this painting, is included in a set of prints depicting the twelve months of the year, which was made by Toyohiro in collaboration with his older colleague, Toyokuni I (1769–1825).<sup>1</sup>

Toyohiro and Toyokuni were star pupils of Utagawa Toyoharu (1735–1814), who was, in turn, a pupil of Toriyama Sekien (no. 91). Toyokuni, who was more often Toyohiro's rival than his collaborator, seems to have been the more aggressive of the two. He is well known for actor prints of excellent quality. Toyohiro, on the other hand, had a gentle personality, and he concentrated on paintings of women and landscapes, seldom making prints. His work is marked by quiet restraint, and his elongated and elegant women express a reticence that is in contrast with the proud display of beauty and costumes. Ultimately, however, his greatest contribution to the art of Ukiyo-e was not in painting or printmaking but in his role as a teacher of the young Andō Hiroshige, a great master of Ukiyo-e in the nineteenth century.

1. Tokyo National Museum, ed., *Bijin-ga, II, Ukiyo-e Zenshū* (Tokyo, 1956), pl. 16; Takahashi Seiichirō, *Edo no Ukiyo-e Shi*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 22 (Tokyo, 1964), fig. 91.





## Two Courtesans Parodying Kanzan and Jittoku

Edo period

Toyomaro (active, 1804–1817)

Hanging scroll; color on paper

H. 122.7 x W. 56.5 cm (48<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.)

SEAL: "Toyomaro"

EX COLLECTION: Frank E. Hart, Palm Beach, Florida

PUBLISHED: Narazaki Muneshige, ed., *Zaigai Hibō*:

*Japanese Paintings in Western Collections* (Tokyo, 1969), III, pl. 81; Martie W. Young and Robert J.

Smith, *Japanese Painters of the Floating World*

(Ithaca, New York, 1966), no. 52; *Japanese Paintings from the Frank E. Hart Collection* (Palm Beach,

Florida, 1963), no. 63.



Who would believe that these two beautiful women are actually impersonating the legendary Zen eccentrics Kanzan and Jittoku? Notable for their bizarre actions and waggish appearances, Kanzan and Jittoku (Han-shan and Shih-te, in Chinese) are traditional subjects of ink painting (see no. 31). The depiction of courtesans imitating personalities from religious anecdotes or ancient literature is an important aspect of Ukiyo-e. Such classical themes are often overlooked by modern audiences of Ukiyo-e, because they are so skillfully disguised by the beauty of the women or of the costumes. The precise origin of these classical adaptations is not known. Perhaps they were chosen to please the more educated patrons of their arts as a means of elevating the somewhat lowly esteem of this art form in the eyes of their contemporaries, or even as an educational device disguised in the most familiar terms. This particular theme was frequently used by the print artist Suzuki Harunobu (1725–1770).

In this painting the seated woman, her beautiful *uchikake* (a coat) decorated with golden peacock feathers, is Kanzan, the poet, so identified because she is writing a letter, perhaps to her lover. Her companion stands by and looks on as she holds a broom, the attri-



bute of Jittoku most commonly used in ink paintings. In spite of its wit and elegance the painting generates warmth and intimacy, stemming primarily from the informal dress of the two, especially that of the woman who is standing.

As is the case with many Ukiyo-e artists, little is known about Toyomaro. From a stylistic point of view, he appears to emulate the portrayal of mature womanhood made popular by Kitagawa Utamaro (1754–1806). While Toyomaro's women do not express the sense of compelling, psychological complexity characteristic of Utamaro's women, the graceful, stately figures of the women of this painting certainly recall Utamaro's later work. Moreover, Toyomaro used in his seal here two stylized dragons flanking the characters for "Toyomaro" within a large round format—closely resembling a seal that Utamaro frequently impressed on his works. It is quite possible, then, that Toyomaro was a pupil of Utamaro and may even have used the school name, Kitagawa.



P A R T 5      The Aesthetics of Technique  
*Ceramics and Lacquerware*

## Tall-necked Jar

Seventh century

Sue ware

H. 24.7 cm (9¾ in.)

Sue ware (Sueki) was the first Japanese pottery to be thrown on the potters's wheel and fired at a high temperature. It is generally believed that Korean potters introduced this advanced technique to Japan in the early fifth century; previously Japan had produced only porous, unglazed wares. The introduction of Sue ware revolutionized the old forms of pottery-making and signaled the dawn of the Japanese ceramic industry.

Most Sueki are gray colored and quite thin-bodied; they are usually thrown on the wheel, but the coil method was also used, in which case the vessel was finished on the wheel. The method of throwing the clay was quite primitive at first, however. Early pieces, both small bottles and large jars, were often made in three or four parts: the body made of several pieces, the neck thrown on the wheel separately, and then later joined to the body. The new ware was fired at about 1200 to 1300 degrees centigrade—roughly the temperature at which modern stonewares are fired—in semisubterranean kilns built alongside hillocks. These vessels were not glazed, but a natural, pleasant, mellow green glaze was produced accidentally in a reducing kiln as wood ash fell on the vessels during firing. The kiln-sites of the earliest Sueki were discovered around Sue-mura ("Sue-village"), south of Osaka, which was the political and cultural center of Japan in the fifth century. By the end of the fifth century, the new technique had spread to remote parts of the country: more than 2000 kiln-sites of Sueki have been discovered from northern Japan to Shikoku Island, and many provinces have a share of villages called Sue-mura. An especially heavy

concentration of Sueki kiln-sites has been found around Nagoya: Mino and Seto areas, to which the center of Sueki production seems to have shifted in the late Nara and Heian periods, after its decline in the Osaka area. The development of Sueki kilns in the Nagoya area anticipated the later flowering of ceramic industry there through the Kamakura and Momoyama periods and even into modern times.

The earliest Sueki from the fifth and sixth centuries are very similar to Korean prototypes and stand high on tall bases with perforated designs. These large vessels seem to have been used for ceremonial and ritual purposes, but as the production increased, everyday wares were made to be used at the court and the homes of aristocracy. There slowly evolved more casual shapes suitable to daily use and more appealing to the native Japanese taste. Most seventh-century Sueki are intended to hold liquids, a function that these high-fired wares could perform much better than the more porous native ware. Shapes of this period are freer, more often asymmetrical, than earlier, Korean-inspired works.

This charming asymmetrical bottle of rather hard-fired gray-bodied pottery, emits a resonant sound when struck. The mellow brown-green glaze has pooled in mottles at the shoulders and is streaked like icicles down the bulbous body. Bottles like this one are called Yokobe[i]—"recumbent bottle"—describing their lateral, rather than upright, form; they may have been used as wine jars. The bottles made before the Nara period usually do not have a foot or base. Judging from the seams, the body of this vessel was probably made from three or four pieces in an upright position, and its opening at the top closed off with a shallow saucer. The tall graceful neck, an innovation of the late sixth century, was thrown separately and joined to a new opening cut into the side of the bottle. All the bottles of the seventh century have sharp lines where the neck of the vessel begins to rise. Later pieces from the Heian period were made entirely on the wheel.





## Mizusashi (Water Jar)

Momoyama period (late sixteenth century)

Iga ware

H. 20.6 cm (8 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.)

EX COLLECTION: Count Matsuura

PUBLISHED: Hayashiya Seizō, *Nihon no Tōji* (Tokyo, 1972), II, pl. 352; Hayashiya Seizō, "Iga Water Jar," *Kobijutsu* 37 (June 1972), pp. 93–94; Daniel Rhodes, *Tamba Pottery: The Timeless Art of a Japanese Village* (Tokyo, 1970), fig. 10.

The peculiar, distorted beauty of this jar epitomizes the aesthetic spirit of the Momoyama-period tea circle. In its vibrant presence and tactile surface, the jar resembles modern abstract sculpture, but it was meant for a utilitarian function. Such vessels, the products of kilns in Iga province (northern part of the modern Mie prefecture), are usually flower vases or water jars (*mizusashi*) used in the tea ceremony. Most of them are misshapen and cracked, like this vessel, and have transparent, jewellike green glazes produced during the firing as a result of the accidental falling of natural ash. Many Iga potteries also have deep, deliberate incisions made either by sharp spatula or knives, seen here in the distinct plane separating the bulbous neck from the squashed body. The potter's fingers have also marked the piece, as he turned the soft clay on the wheel, leaving an intimate imprint of his activity.

The Iga kilns were located at the juncture of the Nara and Shigaraki districts, and their history goes back almost to the very beginning of the Japanese ceramic industry. In ancient periods, they produced Sue wares (no. 96), and in the medieval period, utilitarian vessels, which are so similar in body and glaze to the wares made in the Shigaraki area that the two wares are hardly distinguishable from each other. Iga wares of the Momoyama period differ from Shigaraki wares in their function as tea-ceremony vessels and more importantly in their fine, white bodies, which were

fired at a much higher temperature than Shigaraki wares. The deformity of Iga wares is partly due to the accidental eruption of the body, which was precipitated by extremely high firing. The firing process usually continued for four hundred hours, sometimes for as long as seventy days. It also caused a red or black scorch to appear on the body, which dramatically contrasts with the vitreous green glaze. The unique shape and fortuitous run of the glaze were often accidental. Once the ware's beauty received the stamp of approval from tastemakers in the tea circle, however, such "damage" was, to a certain degree, artificially induced and the effect premeditated.

The first recorded use of Iga wares in the tea ceremony is a tea party given in 1587 by the tea master Sen no Rikyū (1520–1591) in honor of Ieyasu, the first Tokugawa shogun.<sup>1</sup> Afterward, the ware is mentioned regularly and frequently in the records of tea parties. Nevertheless, the extraordinary quality of Iga wares is thought to be a reflection of the aesthetic principles promoted by Furuta Oribe (1544–1615), who might have acted as a catalyst to the craftsmen in his time. This contention is not groundless, since the records of Oribe's tea ceremonies frequently refer to his use of Iga flower vases and *mizusashi*.<sup>2</sup> Oribe's approach to tea echoed the extrovert, free, dynamic spirit of the warrior class to which he belonged, and completely countered Rikyū's extremely refined, subdued aesthetics.

Oribe was a close associate and teacher in the tea ceremony of the lord of Iga, Tsutsui Sadatsugu (d. 1615), who was a son-in-law of Oda Nobunaga and an aesthetic-minded, refined warrior-ruler of Iga province from 1585–1608. During his reign, pottery-making flourished, and large kilns were operated within his castle compound at Ueno. Pottery shards and several complete vessels similar to this *mizusashi* were excavated in 1935 from the site of the Ueno Castle.<sup>3</sup> Since similar shards were also found at the kiln sites outside the castle compound, the Burke *mizusashi* cannot be dated to the twenty-three-year period under the



reign of Sadatsugu. However, the pottery-making activities at Iga kilns passed its zenith in the 1680s. Evidently, powerful, truly creative works like this piece and the celebrated, very similar *mizusashi* in the Gotō Museum, Tokyo, were both produced when Iga wares attained their greatest popularity in the late sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth centuries.

1. Katsura Matasaburō, *Iga Yaki Tsūshi* (Tokyo, 1968), p. 148.
2. Literary references to Iga wares used in tea ceremonies are conveniently summarized by Katsura, *Iga Yaki*, pp. 148–153; Mitsuoka Tadanari, *Shigaraki, Iga, Bizen, Tamba*, Tōki Zenshū, vol. XX, ed. Koyama Fujio (Tokyo, 1962), pp. 12–15.
3. Hayashiya Seizō, “Iga Water Jar,” *Kobijutsu* 37 (June 1972), p. 101; Kikuyama Toneo, “Iga no Koyō Angya,” *Charwan* 69 (November 1936), pp. 10–15.

## Tea Bowl

Momoyama period (late sixteenth century)

Mino ware, Shino

H. 10.5 cm ( $4\frac{1}{8}$  in.); D. 14 cm ( $5\frac{1}{4}$  in.); D. of foot,  
6.6 cm ( $2\frac{9}{16}$  in.)

Mino kilns, which produced some of the finest pieces of potteries in the Momoyama period—the wares called Shino, Oribe, and Ki Seto—are located in an area some fifteen miles north of Seto near Nagoya, the great pottery-making center of medieval Japan. Mino kilns have fallen into oblivion since the eighteenth century, and the splendid Momoyama wares of Shino and Oribe were long considered as products of the Seto kilns. In 1930, however, old kiln-sites at Mino were rediscovered by Arakawa Toyozō, one of the greatest living potters of Japan, and recent excavations have provided some clues that help reconstruct the history of the Mino kilns.

Mino was apparently a very important pottery-making center in the Nara and Heian periods, producing fine Sueki for use at temples and in aristocratic homes. Their production was probably under semicontrol of the government, and they had the unique distinction of being stamped with the seals of “Mino” as indication of their provenance.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Mino kilns are sometimes credited with inaugurating the production of the superior, fine white Sueki with premeditated glazes.<sup>2</sup> During the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, however, the kilns were overshadowed by the very successful Seto kilns. It is believed that a large number of Seto potters migrated to Mino in the second half of the sixteenth century and that they were led by the well-known Katō family of potters. The cause of the exodus is unknown—perhaps the potters sought a new source of fuel or safety from the ravages of civil wars. The Mino kilns then experienced a spectacular revival at the hands of Seto potters, probably encouraged by Sen no Rikyū (1520–1591), the leading tea master of the Momoyama period. The main products were tea-related vessels: tea bowls, *mizusashi* (water jars), and

dinner wares used at the *kaiseki*, the simple dinner that preceded the tea company. Dinner wares, which constitute a majority of Shino and Oribe wares, signify a new age in the Japanese ceramic industry and in the eating habits of the Japanese people. Before the Mino kilns produced the food-serving wares for the *kaiseki*, the Japanese people took their meals on vessels made of wood, lacquered wood, and on unglazed pottery, except for special occasions for which prized Chinese ceramics might have been used. In this respect, the Mino kilns hold an important place in Japanese culture.

The first outstanding product of the Mino kilns was Shino ware, which is regarded as a uniquely Japanese expression in the art of ceramics. Shino wares are distinguished from other Japanese potteries by their heavy, rather coarse white body, and thick, cracked, uneven white feldspathic glaze. Intimacy, casual informality of the shape, and the “softness” of the glaze ideally suited the quality of simplicity and artlessness that Rikyū treasured in his tea ceremony. Although the production of Shino ware seems to have begun in earnest in the 1570s, it was not clearly distinguished from the products of other kilns until the beginning of the eighteenth century, almost a century after its production was at its height.<sup>3</sup> Records on tea ceremonies describe new wares with features of Shino ware, yet they are still referred to as Seto wares.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, ceramic wares identified as “Shino” had already made their appearance in the literature of the mid-sixteenth century. In a note on his tea party of 1556, Imai Sōkyū (d. 1593), a great master of tea, refers to a “Shino” ware which is a “dark, purple-colored, thick-bodied ware.”<sup>5</sup> This description does not correspond to the Shino wares known today. Since some wares are identified as “Shino Tem’moku” in the records of tea parties,<sup>6</sup> some scholars believe that the name “Shino” may have been that of the owner of a vessel, most likely Shino Sōshin (1441–1522), a tea master and member of the cognoscenti,<sup>7</sup> and that this vessel might have been a white Tem’moku ware. In the first half of the sixteenth century, tea bowls of white Tem’moku type were produced either at the Seto or Mino kilns in an attempt to reproduce the coveted Korean bowls known in Japan



as “Ido” bowls. This was the first successful attempt by the Japanese to produce white-glazed wares, and some scholars maintain that Shino wares subsequently evolved from the white Tem’moku.

Many Shino wares have painted decorations in iron brown, which were executed directly on the wet clay body. This aspect marked an innovation in Japanese ceramics, which had previously used only incised, stamped, or relief designs. Shino wares with painted designs opened an entirely new avenue in Japanese pottery, but they were technically still the products of an inefficient firing process. They were fired in single-chambered, semisubterranean kilns, so primitive that it took five or more firing days for the temperature to reach the high degree needed for the maturity of glaze. The result was the thick, warm, and uneven white glaze, treasured in the tea ceremony for its singular spontaneity and natural beauty. Ironically, when a better and more efficient kiln, known as the climbing type, was introduced at Mino in the first years of the seventeenth century, it signaled the end of Shino wares. The kiln was introduced by Koreans to Karatsu in northern Kyūshū in the last years of the sixteenth century. The peculiar quality of the Shino ware was lost, since the glaze matured quickly and needed to be fired for only a few days. The glaze ran smooth and thin, enabling more complex painted designs. Potters at Mino then switched their efforts to the making of another and equally renowned ware, the Oribe, which is distinguished for its daring and complex painted decorations (no. 99).

This tea bowl is typical of the Shino bowls produced before the introduction of the improved kilns. Like many Shino tea bowls of the late sixteenth century, this large bowl shows the simple designs of a bridge and a

house, which are sometimes interpreted as a drastically simplified scene of the Sumiyoshi Shrine, an especially popular motif for lacquerwares.

The tactile quality of tea bowls was just as important as the visual one. Thus, pieces such as this were usually first thrown on a potter’s wheel and slightly altered by a gentle pressing of the vessel between the hands when the clay was still soft. The finished bowl feels comfortable in the hands and gentle against the lips. This simple bowl has the standard, late sixteenth-century double-ringed low foot under a wide, straight base and has a tubelike solidity that would allow it to sit securely on the tatami mat when served at the ceremony. Inside the foot-ring is a simple mark of two lines incised on wet clay which is seen on a number of other vessels. They may have been made to distinguish one group of objects from others fired together in the kilns.

1. Tokugawa, Osaka Municipal, and Nezu Museums, ed., *Mino Kotō* (Tokyo, 1971), p. 99.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
3. Fujioka Ryōichi, *Shino to Oribe*, *Nihon no Bijutsu*, 51, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1970), p. 22.
4. For various references to Shino wares used in tea ceremonies, see *ibid.*, pp. 22–23.
5. See Imai Sōkyū’s diary, the *Imai Sōkyū Sayu Nikki Nukigaki*, *Sadō Koten Zenshū*, vol. X, ed. Sen Sōshitsu (Tokyo, 1962), p. 7, in the entry for the second year of the Kōji era (1556).
6. For example, in the book of tea, *Sōjimboku*, which was written in 1626 by an anonymous author. Sen Sōshitsu, ed., *Sadō Koten Zenshū*, vol. III (Tokyo, 1962), p. 248.
7. Hayashiya Seizō, *Chawan*, *Nihon no Bijutsu*, 14, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1967), p. 39.



## Ewer

Momoyama period (early seventeenth century)  
 Mino ware, Oribe  
 H. (including handle) 21 cm (8 $\frac{5}{16}$  in.)

The début of Oribe wares at the Mino kilns in the first few years of the seventeenth century was the result of several auspicious historical events. Hideyoshi's forces invaded Korea in 1592 and 1593, forcing the captured Korean potters to resettle in northern Kyūshū, where they introduced their efficient, multichambered step kiln. This coincided with an increasingly greater demand for Shino ware, then the major product of the

Mino kilns (no. 98). In turn greater popular demand for this product inspired the introduction of a more economical and efficient kiln. The new kiln destroyed the unique beauty of Shino wares, however, and Oribe ware was developed to take advantage of the virtues of the new techniques.

The evolution of Oribe wares is also intimately connected with the tea master and tastemaker, Furuta Oribe (1544–1615). Although no documentary proof for the theory exists, Oribe, who was a native of the Mino region, is said to have personally guided Mino potters in their works. Oribe was among Hideyoshi's forces stationed briefly at Nagoya Castle in northern Kyūshū during the Korean campaign, and he may then





have learned of the new type of kiln and may have helped Katō Kagenobu, the leading potter of Mino to establish the new type of kiln in this area. The new step kiln enabled earlier maturity of glazes under controlled conditions and the use of complex designs and different colors on their wares. It also coincided with the shift of power in the hierarchy of the tea ceremony when Hideyoshi ordered Sen no Rikyū to commit *seppuku* (ritual suicide) in 1591. After his demise, Oribe became Rikyū's heir. Oribe, a product of a warrior family and the swiftly changing Momoyama period, represented a form of aesthetic taste that was diametrically opposed to Rikyū's. While Rikyū preferred subdued simplicity and refined artlessness, Oribe leaned toward forceful, extroverted beauty. Oribe wares vividly reflect this change.

Beginning in the last few years of the sixteenth century, documents of connoisseurs began to mention "new" and "misshapen" wares.<sup>1</sup> Descriptions of these vessels echo the features characteristically associated with Oribe wares, but the name "Oribe," as distinct from other wares, does not begin to appear in the literature of tea before 1724.<sup>2</sup> Many Oribe wares have boldly shaped bodies, often intentionally distorted, and they are decorated by strong, sensuous, and brilliant glazes in black, green, and brown. The vitriol-copper green glaze was used for the first time on Japanese pottery, but the innovation was not limited to the new glazes. Oribe dinner wares in particular show an unprecedented diversity of shape, design, and size; their impact on Japanese life was so great that they are sometimes considered as having helped to revolutionize the eating habits of the Japanese people.<sup>3</sup> In the world of constantly changing fashion in cultural taste and politics, the bold, masculine beauty of Oribe wares was soon supplanted by the standards of a more delicate and sensitive type, which was preferred by the next leader of the tea ceremony, Kobori Enshū (1579–1647), and his followers, in the second half of the seventeenth century.

This ewer is a typical example of Oribe wares from the beginning of the seventeenth century, when production of this ware was at its height. The ewer was intended to be used for pouring soup in the *kaiseki*, the simple dinner preceding the tea ceremony, but it is usually used as a *mizusashi* ("water jar") for the tea cere-

mony, since its wide opening and tall handle did not obstruct this new function. The vessel belongs to a special category known as the Narumi Oribe, which used two types of clay, different in color, but equal in body strength. The lower, decorated part of the body of this ewer was made of red clay, while the handle and the upper part covered in green glaze were made separately in white clay. White clay was best suited to bring out the brilliance of the green glaze, while the warm, salmon pink color of red clay shows through the clear glaze over it, thus creating a striking color contrast unknown in previous Japanese pottery. The designs were executed with great freedom, painted in white slip and then outlined in dark brown.

As in many other Oribe wares, the decoration of this ewer combines naturalistic and geometric designs: the plum flowers and triangular, curtainlike motifs. Oribe potters freely adopted shapes and designs from other art forms. Designs on Oribe vessels bear a striking affinity to contemporary Japanese textile designs, and a relationship has been suggested by a number of scholars.<sup>4</sup> The most active Mino kilns, which produced the finest Shino and Oribe wares, were located in the areas once inhabited by textile designers and dyers, while the name "Narumi" may refer to a village in the nearby Nagoya area, which was famous for its high-quality tie-dyed textiles. Artisans who supplied designs for textile makers may also have worked as decorators of potteries. The ewer here was modeled after a wood or lacquered wood vessel, introducing a new shape to Japanese ceramic wares. The small, round protrusions at the base of the arched handle are nonfunctional: they imitate the nailheads used to fashion the wooden model.

1. Katō Hajime, *Oribe*, Tōki Zenshū, vol. V, ed. Koyoma Fujio, (Tokyo, 1962), p. 2.

2. It first appeared in the *Kaiki*, records of the activities of Konoe Ichiro (1667–1736). See Sen Sōshitsu, ed., *Sadō Kōten Zenshū*, vol. V (Tokyo, 1962), p. 11, in the entry for the eighteenth day, tenth month, ninth year of the Kyōho era (1724).

3. Fujioka Ryōichi, *Cha Dōgu*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 22, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1968), p. 79.

4. Fujioka Ryōichi, *Shino to Oribe*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 51, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1970), p. 81; Yoshiko Kakudō, "Some Special Problems of Japanese Ceramics in the Brundage Collection," Seattle Art Museum, *International Symposium on Japanese Ceramics* (Seattle, 1973), p. 74.

## *Oi* (Monk's Portable Shrine) with Designs of Camellias

Late Muromachi period

Wood with thin coat of lacquer

H. 79 cm (31 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.) x W., at the top, 64.5 cm (25 $\frac{7}{16}$  in.);  
at the bottom, 69 cm (27 $\frac{3}{16}$  in.)

EX COLLECTION: Nakagawa

PUBLISHED: Okada Jō, "Portable Shrine Carried by  
Monk with Designs of Camellias," *Kobijutsu* 22  
(June 1968), pp. 107–108; Kyoto Prefectural  
Museum of Historical Materials, ed., *Camellias: Its  
Representations in Arts and Crafts* (Kyoto, 1966),  
cover, pl. 55.

The *oi* was not originally a knapsack used only by monks in ancient China, but the earliest extant representations of this object are all portraits of traveling monks. A simple type of *oi*, made of a wooden board with two vertical supports at its sides, is depicted in several Chinese paintings and drawings from about tenth century, which were recovered from Tun-huang in northwest China.<sup>1</sup> These paintings portray traveling monk, who carries many sutras tied to his *oi*. A much more sophisticated and more substantial-looking wooden box is depicted in a later Chinese painting, dating from the late thirteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

The *oi* must have been introduced to Japan sometime before the tenth century, since it is mentioned in the *Wamyō Ruijū Shō*, the oldest encyclopedia of Japan, which was edited by Minamoto Shitagō (911–983) between 931 and 938.<sup>3</sup> According to this reference, the Japanese name "*oi*" is a derivative of the verb "*ou*," meaning to carry something on one's back. The *oi* was also called a "*fumi-bako*," a box for written documents. The dictionary makes no suggestion that *oi* is associated only with Buddhist monks, but by the thirteenth century, it seems to have become their exclusive property. Monks carried in it sutras, foods, and personal effects needed for traveling. Thirteenth-century narrative scrolls such as the *Kitano Tenjin Engi* in the Kitano Shrine, Kyoto, or the *Saigyō Scrolls* in the Tokugawa Museum and Ōhara collection in Okayama

depict monks carrying the simple board-and-support type, the *ita-oi*. However, the fourteenth-century *Hōnen Shōnin Scrolls* in the Chion-in collection in Kyoto, or a later version (about 1500) of the *Saigyō Scrolls*, depict the box type, the *hako-oi*. No example of the *hako-oi* prior to the sixteenth century has been found, and it seems that the type of *hako-oi* known today may have been a later importation from China. Although *ita-oi* is not found in the post-fourteenth-century *emaki*, a small number of examples of this type date from the late sixteenth century, suggesting that its use continued into the much later periods.

In the meantime, the *oi* became the most important accouterment of the Shugenja, followers of the harsh brand of religion called Shugendō, which requires as training the continuous exercise of mountain climbing. This religion combines Shintoism and Buddhism, and it is traditionally believed to have been started by En no Gyōja (634–?). For his followers, the *oi* was indispensable, and a special type of *hako-oi* seems to have been developed especially for their use. It has four legs at the four corners of the box, and the surface that faces outward when the box is worn is completely covered with bronze plate decorated in relief. Another type of *hako-oi*, with only three legs—two at the front sides and one in the center back—has decorative designs carved directly on its wood surface. It is not associated exclusively with Shugenja, but the provenance of extant works suggests that it also had a very close link with the group.

This *oi* is a typical example of the second type, and was probably made in the northeastern region of Japan in the late Muromachi period. Many almost identical *oi* have been found from the same area north of Tokyo: for example, at Chūsonji in Iwate and Shigenji in Fukushima prefectures. The upper three tiers have doors that open out when a bottle-shaped slab is removed. The interior of the case is divided into three registers, the topmost of which may have been used to hold Buddhist statuettes, thus converting the box into a temporary Buddhist altar. Only the façade is decorated, while the rest is coated with a thin layer of black lacquer. The decoration is found on many similar *oi* and

consists of motifs symbolizing longevity: red camellia flowers, pine, cranes, and an imaginary turtle with long, feathery tails. The camellia was regarded as an especially potent protector against evil spirits, and it is represented on almost all the *oi* decorated by carved designs.

The surface of this *oi* is not perfectly smooth, and the texture of the wood conveys a sense of directness, strength, and vigor. Designs are painted in red, ochre, and green in the so-called *Kamakura-bori* ("Kamakura-carving") technique.<sup>4</sup> This type of polychrome

relief carving is believed to have been developed in Japan as a simple and less costly substitute for the time-consuming technique of Chinese lacquer carving known in Japan as *chōshitsu*. In this technique, extremely fine designs are carved into thick layers of lacquer. In the simpler *Kamakura-bori* substitute, the wood base itself is carved in relief, and only thin coats of lacquer are applied over the designs. So far as is known, the *Kamakura-bori* cannot be traced in literature dating before the late fifteenth century,<sup>5</sup> and the sculptures, furnitures, and decorations in temple inte-





riors executed in this manner are often attributed to anonymous Buddhist monks. The origin of its traditional association with the city of Kamakura is not known.

1. Akiyama Terukazu, "Deux peintures de Touen-houang sur soie, représentant un pèlerin portant des sūtras et accompagné d'un tigre," *Bijutsu Kenkyū* 283 (January 1965), pp. 163–183.

2. Ogawa Tsuruki, "Koga Genjō Hōshi Angya Zu," *Kokka* 96 (September 1897), no pl. no.

3. Masamune Atsuo, *Wamyō Ruijū Shō*, Nihon Koten Zenshū, vol. IV (Tokyo, 1962).

4. For *Kamakura-bori*, see Gōke Tadaomi, *Kamakura-bori*, *Nihon no Bijutsu*, 70, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1972).

5. The first known literary reference to the *Kamakura-bori* technique appears in the entry for the first day, eighth month, first year of the Chōkyō era (1487), in the *Sanetaka-kō Ki*, ed. Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kansei-kai (Tokyo, 1958), I, II, p. 786.



## Negoro Ware

Wine Flask

Muromachi period

H. 38.5 cm (15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.)

Table

Late Muromachi period

H. 39 cm (15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.); D. 28.5 cm (11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.)

Ewer

Late Muromachi period

H. 36 cm (14<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.)

PUBLISHED: Hosomi Ryō, "Negoro ni tsuite, I,"

*Nihon Bijutsu Kōgei* 284 (May 1962), p. 1.*Wine flask*

Negoro lacquerwares, known for their lustrous cinnabar red color and their austere, functional form, express a special sensitivity of the Japanese to the rustic beauty of everyday objects which have withstood years of handling. The term "Negoro" is, however, quite loosely applied to different varieties of lacquerwares. The deep warm red is the usual color of the ware. With age, the red lacquer becomes almost translucent and wears off in places through use, allowing the undercoating of black lacquer to show through in random patterns. Negoro also includes wares in black lacquer, vessels with painted designs, and others with carved decorations. The colors and shapes of Negoro wares may vary, but all of the objects so classed are simple, sturdy, and durable utensils used daily to serve food.

The time and place of origin of Negoro wares, and the reason for its name are still matters of speculation. The earliest references to Negoro wares date to the Edo period, when the facts and hopeful speculations about them had already been indiscriminately mixed by tea masters and cognoscenti, who were deeply attracted to the unassuming beauty of these objects. Tradition has it that this type of lacquerwares was first made at Negoro-dera, a Buddhist temple in Wakayama prefecture, which was founded in 1140 by Kakuban (1095–1143), a learned, influential monk from Mount

Kōya. The temple enjoyed great prosperity, sometimes including almost six thousand monks, until 1585, when it was savagely destroyed in the infamous campaign by Toyotomi Hideyoshi into this region. According to the traditional claim, monks of this temple produced the simple lacquerwares both for their own use and for sale. Indeed, a few objects are inscribed with the name of this temple, suggesting that it was either their provenance or the original ownership.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the interior of the temple and the ritual utensils used at Negoro-dera are completely painted in red lacquer. Although they are considered to postdate the destruction of the temple,<sup>2</sup> they may faithfully reproduce the original pieces made before 1585. Unfortunately, however, no Negoro ware has so far been definitely attributed to this temple, nor does any early document mention that Negoro ware was produced there. Furthermore, some objects which can rightly be designated as Negoro ware predate the founding of the temple; many others postdate its destruction; and the provenance of still another group has been definitely established elsewhere.

Because they are everyday objects, Negoro utensils are rather conservative in form and style, reflecting little of the changing taste and fashion of the time when they were produced. The only exception to this rule is the marked Chinese influence seen in a few shapes. The strong, simple shape of the wine flask here is typical of most Negoro objects. Its broad, thick shoulders taper sharply to a narrow waist, and then the form flares again to a wide, stable base. The clean, direct profile is softened by the warm luster of red lacquer; the black spots where the lacquer has worn away are the reminder of its age and its intimate contact with innumerable hands.

A strong Chinese influence can be seen on the two other Negoro wares. The delicate table with metal fittings was probably used to hold ritual objects before an icon in the temple or in the monks' living quarters. It has tall, slender legs that meet the top with triangular panels. The panels have a decorative, undulating profile, which seems to have become popular on temple furnishings beginning in the late Kamakura period in

Table



the fourteenth century; they begin to be reproduced in fourteenth-century *emaki*, such as the *Hōnen Shōnin Scrolls* at Chion-in and *Boki Ekotoba Scroll* at Nishi Honganji, both of Kyoto.

Another example of Chinese influence may be seen in the complex shape of the ewer, which is probably the most intricate form ever associated with Negoro wares. This ewer and an identical one in the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C., both have floral projections at the base of the large handle, bulbous lids, thread motifs on the neck and the body, and sharp curving pro-





files at the bases. Inside the lid and at the bottom of this vessel are two Chinese characters, reading “*en*” and “*myō*,” the meanings of which are still uncertain. They may refer to Em’myōji, the first building at Negoro-dera, the nucleus of the bustling temple complex. The table and the ewer reflect a tendency to favor delicate and complex profiles over the robust vitality that characterized the earlier works from the Kamakura and early Muromachi periods. They must therefore be dated slightly later than the flask, toward the end of the Muromachi period, in the sixteenth century.

1. Arakawa Hirokazu, “Dated Specimens of Negoro Lacquerwares,” *Museum* 92 (November 1958), p. 25.
2. Yoshioka Yōji et al., *Negoro* (Atami, 1966), p. 26.



*Ewer and lid*



*Box with design of pines and plovers*

## IO2

### Three *Kōgō* (Incense Boxes) in *Maki-e* Lacquer

Box with Design of Pines and Plovers  
Late Kamakura period (early fourteenth century)  
W. 6.9 x L. 9.4 cm ( $2\frac{3}{4}$  x  $3\frac{1}{16}$  in.)

Box with Design of Pampas Grass  
Early Muromachi period (fifteenth century)  
W. 6.3 x L. 8.5 cm ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  x  $3\frac{3}{8}$  in.)

Box with Inlaid Peacock Design  
Muromachi period  
W. 6.5 x L. 8.5 cm ( $2\frac{9}{16}$  x  $3\frac{3}{8}$  in.)  
EX COLLECTION: Howard C. Hollis, New York  
PUBLISHED: Sherman Lee, *Japanese Decorative Style*  
(Cleveland, n.d.), no. 40.

Although these three boxes were made over a hundred years apart, they share many common features: they were made in the lacquer technique called *maki-e*; because of their function as cosmetic boxes, they are similar in dimensions; and they were later converted into incense boxes for use at the tea ceremony.

Originally, the boxes held articles used in a curious custom called *haguro*, blackening of the teeth with liquid obtained from the mixture of iron and other minerals. *Haguro* was an important cosmetic for both men and women of ancient Japan. The origin of the custom is obscure, but it seems to have been common even before the Nara period, and during the Heian period it was regarded as a sign of sophistication and gentility. Court nobles of Kyoto continued to use

*baguro* throughout the Edo period, and some women did so until the late nineteenth century. Its symbolic application formed an important part of the maturity ceremony for boys and girls at the age of nine. However, young women applied *baguro* on their teeth only after matrimony, as it symbolized fidelity.

These boxes are distinguished from other types of toiletry containers by their rectangular shapes. Extant examples of complete sets of cosmetic boxes indicate that usually two of each of three different kinds of boxes were placed in a large box: square-shaped boxes for face powder, round ones for incense, and rectangular ones for *baguro*. The boxes here were separated from the original sets to which they once belonged to be used at the tea ceremony. Before the late sixteenth century, when the Japanese themselves began making small pottery boxes specifically designed for incense, they often substituted such small lacquer vessels for extremely popular, but rare and expensive Chinese imports.

All three boxes are delicately decorated in the lac-

quer technique known as *maki-e* (“sprinkled picture”), which made Japanese lacquerwares exportable to China and Korea.<sup>1</sup> In this “sprinkling” technique, designs were first applied in lacquer, and finely ground metallic dust or pigments were sprinkled over the still-wet lacquer designs. After the entire surface was coated with a layer of lacquer, it was slowly and carefully rubbed off until the metal-covered designs showed through, and finally, a protective coating of clear lacquer was applied over the entire surface. Many literary works of the tenth century—among them, the *Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* (*Taketori Monogatari*) and the *Tales of Ise* (*Ise Monogatari*)—give descriptions of beautiful palace interiors and furniture sumptuously decorated in *maki-e*. Other evidence suggests that this technique was fairly developed already in the ninth century. In the Kamakura period, the *maki-e* was perfected, as it became possible to grade gold metal into finer dust which produced a more lustrous and stronger glow.

The background of these boxes is covered evenly with fine gold speckles, producing an effect called

*Box with design of pampas grass*





*Box with inlaid peacock design*

*nashiji* ("pear background"), because it resembles the spotted skin of Japanese pears. The *maki-e* completely covers the boxes, except for the bottoms. A different design motif on each of them is continued with unity from the lid to the four sides of the box. Among the three, the box with a design of pine trees on the shore and beach plovers is the oldest, since the slightly sharper curve on its lid dates it to the Kamakura period.<sup>2</sup> The decorative motif on this box is typical of this period, and its intricacy and power are worthy of a

much larger object. The two other boxes have more delicate designs, reflecting the trend prevalent in the Muromachi period.

1. For example, exports of Japanese *maki-e* lacquerwares are mentioned in history of the Sung dynasty, the *Sung Shih*, vol. 491.
2. Arakawa Hirokazu, *Maki-e*, Nihon no Bijutsu, 35, ed. staff of the National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo (Tokyo, 1969), p. 64.

Kōdaiji *Maki-e* Lacquerwares

Drum Core with Design of Grapevines and Squirrels

Early Edo period (early seventeenth century)

H. 28 cm (11 $\frac{1}{16}$  in.); outer D. 11.5 cm (4 $\frac{9}{16}$  in.)

PUBLISHED: Minamoto Toyomune et al., *Budō*,

Nihon no Mon'yō, vol. XIII (Kyoto, 1973), no. 57.

*Kuro-dana* with Design of Grapevines and

Nine-ringed Crests

Early Edo period (early seventeenth century)

H. 68 cm (26 $\frac{13}{16}$  in.); Top shelf, 36.4 x 76 cm

(14 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 29 $\frac{15}{16}$  in.)

These two lacquerwares represent the best in Momoyama-period decorative style: a simple motif depicted boldly and clearly, reduced to essential details, and in striking contrast of gold against black. The technique used to produce these dramatic-looking objects signals a complete departure from the older *maki-e* technique of no. 102.

Both the stand and the drum core are decorated with large designs of grapevines, a popular subject in the decorative arts of the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries. The drum core also includes the design of squirrels: one is illustrated here; another on the opposite side of the drum reveals only the tip of his large, furry tail. Scattered among the delicate grapevine pattern on the shelf and the sides of the stand are large family crests. The simplicity of the composition, the large motifs, the strong two-dimensionality of the designs, and the contrasts of black and gold are characteristics of a group of lacquerwares generally known as the "Kōdaiji *maki-e*."<sup>1</sup> Kōdaiji is the name of a small Kyoto temple built by the widow of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (d. 1598) as a mortuary temple for her husband and herself. The interior ornament of the chapel of this temple, Reioku, and various utensils that seem to have been the favorites of this couple are decorated in the *maki-e* technique, in designs very similar to those here.

*Drum core*

To decorate interiors of buildings with *maki-e* was not unique to this temple: other large structures, such as Nobunaga's Azuchi Castle, were extensively decorated with lacquer decorations. In fact, tradition has it that the Reioku of Kōdaiji was built out of materials removed from Hideyoshi's Fushimi Castle, which was built in 1594 to 1597 and demolished in 1622. There are also lacquerwares executed in the same technique in other Kyoto temples usually associated with Hideyoshi. The term "Kōdaiji *maki-e*" is applied to all these objects. Besides the large decorative motifs, such as autumn grasses, Kōdaiji-type lacquer works differ from traditional *maki-e* in that a much simpler technique was employed to produce them. Gold or silver dust was often left exposed, without a protective coating of shiny, clear lacquer, creating a new soft, subtle effect. Delicate details such as veins of leaves were simply incised into the lacquer, while in the traditional *maki-e* technique such details were delineated carefully by finely lacquered lines. Some design motifs were filled in with fine gold speckles (*nashiji*), while they were applied only on background areas in the traditional *maki-e* technique. The use of *nashiji* arranged within design motifs facilitated variations in gold colors, and it was an efficient method of creating a dramatic contrast with a plain black background. Large family crests were often incorporated into the decorative scheme of Kōdaiji lacquers.

Dated inscriptions and signatures of artists are found on the lacquered wood parts of the building of Reioku at Kōdaiji. Although the interpretation of these inscriptions is still a matter of debate, it is generally agreed that the inscriptions refer to the name "Kōami" and to the year corresponding to 1596.<sup>2</sup> Kōami was the name of the leading lacquer-making family of the Muromachi through Edo periods. The decoration of some of the utensils preserved at Kōdaiji combines the typical Kōdaiji style and the traditional, more elaborate technique, which strongly resembles that used on some lacquer works that are firmly attributed to the Kōami artists. On the other hand, the so-called "Kōdaiji" style is strikingly similar to a number of lacquerwares grouped under the category of "Namban lacquer" (lacquer objects of the Namban, the "Barbarians from the

South"). The term "Namban" was then used to refer to the European visitors to Japan, mostly Portuguese, who were viewed with curiosity in sixteenth-century Japan. Europeans in Japan purchased a large quantity of Japanese lacquerwares to order, and their letters to friends and colleagues often refer to the progress of their purchases.<sup>3</sup> Their records suggest that some large workshops in Kyoto, employing as many as fifty artisans, worked to meet their demands.<sup>4</sup> These shops may have specialized in export wares, mass-producing them in simple, quick techniques, which led, perhaps unwittingly, to a direct, vivid, and sensuous style. It has been speculated that the Kōami family, in order to complete large commissions from Hideyoshi or his family members, employed these anonymous artisans, thus injecting into their own traditional style a freedom and vitality that characterize works made outside the official atelier.

The grapevine design is often considered a Namban-inspired motif, possibly because of its association with Christianity. Certainly it is one of the most frequent and striking motifs seen on Kōdaiji lacquers, but the motif was not new to Japanese art; it appeared as part of the standard repertory of decorative designs in Buddhist arts of the Nara period, reflecting its enormous popularity in T'ang China.<sup>5</sup> After its decline in the late eighth century, the motif reappeared as a subject of ink painting almost six hundred years later in the Muromachi period, echoing its popularity in ink paintings, ceramics, and lacquerwares of China and Korea. The resurgence of this motif in the Momoyama arts, therefore, is not solely due to the Namban influence. Designs of grapevines and squirrels were also enormously popular in the arts of the Yi dynasty in Korea. It is interesting to note that while grapevines alone are represented on the objects destined for church use, the grapevine-and-squirrel motif is found only on traditional Japanese objects.

The grapevine-and-squirrel design decorates the strikingly beautiful drum core. A golden squirrel boldly displaying his large, furry tail, appears on each side. Some large vine leaves are filled with *nashiji* speckles, creating a contrast of colors. The design, as with those of many other drum cores of this period decorated in



the Kōdaiji style, is unrelated to the Noh drama in which it was used. For actual use, the two ends of the drum were covered with leather secured by cords. In its style, technique, and subject, this drum core is a prime example of the Kōdaiji-and-Namban type of lacquerwares that were popular in the early seventeenth century.

On the set of shelves, grapevines sway gracefully from shelf to shelf, and they are punctuated by large patterns of a family crest. The crest of the type known as the *kuyō*, “nine stars,” was common to many families at this time, so it cannot be attributed to any particular one. The combination of naturalistic grapevines and a family crest is a typical decorative scheme and may be found on many utensils in the Kōdaiji collection. The mixture of the *nashiji* and the plain gold patterns in the crests and grape leaves also show an affinity to the Kōdaiji objects. The piece has only one compartment with doors, which are decorated on the back with a pair of imaginary lions. These lions, familiar creatures in the repertory of gold screen paintings of the Momoyama and early Edo periods, are executed in the traditional *maki-e* technique with slightly raised outlines. The combination of two different techniques is also reminiscent of some Kōdaiji objects associated with the Kōami artists, but they are rarely used together on Namban lacquerwares. Yet, Namban influence can be seen in such features as the scroll patterns on the vertical posts supporting the shelves. These patterns, known as “Namban palmettes” to distinguish them from traditional palmette designs, are used frequently on Christian objects but also occasionally on traditional Japanese furnishings.

This type of stand is known as a *kuro-dana* (“black shelf”), and it was an indispensable accouterment in the dowry of any wealthy girl. Together with two other types of stands—the *zushi-dana*, for various toilet articles, and the *sho-dana*, for books and scrolls—the *kuro-dana* formed a center piece among the decorative and functional furnishings in the living quarters of women. The *kuro-dana* was used to store cosmetic boxes and toilet articles, especially those used in the blackening of the teeth (*baguro*) (see no. 102). The *kuro-dana* is distinguished easily from the two other types of cabinets by the completely open side panels, the single compartment on the second level from the bottom, the perfectly straight profile of the top shelf, and the slightly smaller size. A simple prototype is represented in such fourteenth-century *emaki* as the *Zenkyōbō Scrolls* in the Suntory Museum of Tokyo, but the standard for the form and the trio arrangement of these shelves was probably not established much before the sixteenth century.

1. Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Kōdaiji Maki-e* (Kyoto, 1971).
2. Ibid., pp. 31 ff; Arakawa Hirokazu, *Namban Shitsu-gei* (Tokyo, 1971).
3. Arakawa, *Namban*, pp. 124–128; N. Murakami and K. Murakawa, eds., *Letters Written by the English Residents in Japan, 1611–1623* (Tokyo, 1900).
4. For example, a letter by William Adames to Richard Wickham of Hirado, dated 10 November 1617, in *ibid.*
5. Minamoto Toyomune et al., *Budō, Nihon no Mon'yō*, vol. XIII (Kyoto, 1973).



*Kuro-dana*



# Chinese and Japanese Names

Listed below are the Chinese and Japanese characters for the entry titles, the names of artists, technical terms, and Japanese temples, shrines, and palaces. The numbers refer to catalogue entries.

## A

藍染  
愛染明王  
阿弥陀  
安藤広重  
安国寺  
安樂寺  
青木木米  
    夙夜  
荒川豊藏  
安土城

Aizen 16  
Aizen Myōō 16  
Amida 3, 15  
Andō Hiroshige 94  
Ankokuji 29  
Anrakuji 22  
Aoki Mokubei 80  
    Shukuya 76  
Arakawa Toyozō 98  
Azuchi Castle Part 3

## B

毘沙門天  
墨溪  
墨斎 (没倫) 紹等  
牧松周省  
梵天  
豊干  
文人画  
仏日庵  
平等院

Bishamonten 2, 8  
Bokkei 32, 34  
Bokusai (Botsurin) Shōtō 36  
Bokushō Shūshō 35  
Bonten 1  
Bukan 31  
Bunjinga 64-86  
Butsunichi-an 25, 31  
Byōdō-in 3, 15, 46

## C

張即之  
    莘  
    宏  
趙昌  
    孟頫  
浙派  
陳繼儒  
    獻章  
江大来  
喬仲常  
錢選  
    穀

Chang Chi-chih 56  
    Hsin 81  
    Hung 67  
Chao Ch'ang 43  
    Meng-fu 70  
Che School 65, 81  
Ch'en Chi-ju Part 4  
    Hsien-chang 60  
Chiang Ta-lai 85  
Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang 65  
Ch'ien Hsüan 80  
    Ku 80, 85

竹林七賢  
荆浩  
青竜寺  
頂相  
知恩院  
智恩寺  
知足軒  
仇英  
張月樵  
彫漆  
周之冕  
朱銳  
仲安真康  
仲仁  
鐘子期  
中尊寺

Chikurin Shichiken 41  
Ching Hao 61  
Ch'ing-lung-ssu 18  
Chinsō 29  
Chion-in 15, 45  
Chionji 29  
Chisoku-ken 28  
Ch'iu Ying 70  
Chō Gesshō 86  
Chōshitsu 100  
Chou Chih-mien 86  
Chu Jui 65  
Chūan Shinkō 37  
Chung-jen 36  
Chung Tzu-ch'i 43  
Chūsonji 10, 11, 100

## D

大伝法院  
大般若波羅蜜多經  
  
醍醐寺  
大覚寺  
大仙院  
大徳寺  
  
大蔵経寺

Dai Dempō-in 14  
Dai Han'nya Baramita Kyō  
    10  
Daigoji 7, 12, 18  
Daikakuji 44  
Daisen-in 43  
Daitokuji 34, 36, 39, 40, 43,  
    61  
Daizōkyōji 31

## E

絵解  
絵屋  
英元章  
永源寺  
永興寺  
栄松斎長喜  
絵馬  
絵巻物

E-toki 45  
E-ya 57  
Ei Genshō 66  
Eigenji 28, 85  
Eikōji 28  
Eishōsai Chōki 91  
Ema 62, 70, 88  
Emaki-mono 20-24

円明寺  
縁起  
円覚寺  
延暦寺

Em'myōji 101  
Engi 22, 24  
Enkakujī 31  
Enryakuji 13

## F

賦  
不動明王  
藤原伊勢  
信実  
定家  
深江芦舟  
吹抜屋台  
富貴寺  
福源寺  
福嚴寺  
文箱  
古田織部  
伏見城

Fu 65  
Fudō Myōō 7  
Fujiwara Ise 19  
Nobuzane 20  
Teika 20  
Fukae Roshū 52  
Fukinuke Yatai 51, 58  
Fukkiji Part 1  
Fukugenji 3  
Fukugenji 26  
Fumi Bako 100  
Furuta Oribe 99  
Fushimi Castle 45

## G

願成寺  
願成就院  
芸阿弥  
源氏物語  
銀閣寺  
祇園南海  
御所鬻  
玉畹梵芳  
行書

Ganjōji 14  
Ganjōju-in 8  
Geiami 37  
Genji Monogatari 51, 57-59  
Ginkakujī Part 2  
Gion Nankai 64  
Gosho Mage 87  
Gyokuen Bompō 28  
Gyōsho 70

## H

破墨  
齒黒  
俳画  
俳句  
箱笈  
白描  
花の御所  
英一蝶  
長谷川宗也  
等伯  
服部南郭  
平治物語絵巻  
秀盛

Haboku 35  
Haguro 102, 103  
Haiga 65, 74  
Haiku 65, 74, 90  
Hako-oi 100  
Hakubyō 22, 59  
Hana no Gosho Part 2  
Hanabusa Itchō 89  
Hasegawa Sōya 46  
Tōhaku 46  
Hattori Nankaku 65, 66  
Heiji Monogatari Emaki 23  
Hidemori 33

日吉神社  
日根野鏡水  
菱川師宣  
和翁

方丈  
法成寺  
保寿寺  
方広寺  
豊国神社  
北馬  
翻波  
本阿弥光悦  
光甫  
光瑳

本地垂迹  
本願寺  
鳳凰堂  
報恩院  
法隆寺  
細田栄之  
布袋  
西湖  
夏珪  
雪窓 (普明)

黄筌  
公望

伊海  
一山一寧  
一木造り  
市河米庵  
井戸  
伊賀  
井原西鶴  
池玉瀾  
大雅  
池田孤村  
今井宗久  
印籠  
伊勢物語  
伊勢集  
石山切  
板笈  
伊藤若冲  
厳島神社  
岩佐又兵衛

Hie Shrine 62  
Hineno Kyōsui 83  
Hishikawa Moronobu 88, 89  
Waō 89

Hōjō 43  
Hōjōji 15  
Hojuji 35  
Hōkōji 45  
Hōkoku Shrine 45  
Hokuba 89  
Hompa 1  
Hon'ami Kōetsu 48-50  
Kōho 48  
Kōsa 48  
Honchi Suijaku 4, 18, 22  
Honganji 19  
Hōōdō 3, 15  
Hōon-in 12  
Hōryūji 3, 17  
Hosoda Eishi 92  
Hotei 55  
Hsi-hu 44  
Hsia Kuei 32  
Hsüeh-ch'uang (P'u-ming)  
27, 28  
Huang Ch'üan 64  
Kung-wang 65

## I

I Hai Part 4  
I-shan I-ning Part 1  
Ichiboku-zukuri 1, 2  
Ichikawa Beian 85  
Ido 98  
Iga 97  
Ihara Saikaku Part 4  
Ike Gyokuran 68  
Taiga 68-72  
Ikeda Koson 54  
Imai Sōkyū 98  
Inrō 89  
Ise Monogatari 52  
Ise Shū 19  
Ishiyama Gire 19  
Ita-oi 100  
Itō Jakuchū 60  
Itsukushima Shrine 13, 48  
Iwasa Matabei 89

# J

時代不同歌合絵巻	Jidai Fudō Uta Awase Emaki 20
神護寺経	Jingoji Sutra 11
神於寺縁起絵巻	Jin'ōji (Kōnoji) Engi Emaki 24
拾得	Jittoku 31, 95
上品蓮台寺	Jōbon Rendaiji 12
定朝	Jōchō 3, 15
縄衣	Jōe 29
浄居寺	Jōkyōji 31
浄楽寺	Jōrakujī 8
如拙	Josetsu Part 2
聚楽亭	Jurakudai Part 3

# K

懷月堂安知	Kaigetsudō Anchi 88
安度	Ando 88
度繁	Dohan 88
度辰	Doshin 88
度種	Doshu 88
度秀	Doshū 88
海北友雪	Kaihō Yūsetsu 57
友松	Yūshō 57
快慶	Kaikei 7
会席	Kaiseki 98, 99
楷書	Kaisho 62, 92
過去現在因果経	Kako Genzai Inga Kyō 12
鎌倉彫	Kamakura-bori 100
寛文美人	Kambun Bijin 87
上賀茂神社	Kami Kamo Shrine 45
紙師宗二	Kamishi Sōji 50
賀茂川	Kamo River 45, 63, 94
禿	Kamuro 93
韓天寿	Kan Tenju 67, 69
仮名	Kana 19
狩野永敬	Kanō Eikei 61
永納	Einō 44
永徳	Eitoku 44, 58
玉燕	Gyokuen 91
玉楽	Gyokuraku 40
正信	Masanobu 43
典信	Michinobu 92
元信	Motonobu 43
山楽	Sanraku 44
山雪	Sansetsu 44, 61

松栄	Shōei 44
殊牧	Shuboku 40
周信	Shūshin 91
探幽	Tan'yū 31, 32
常信	Tsunenobu 27, 58
安信	Yasunobu 32, 56, 58, 89
鑑貞	Kantei 34
寒山	Kanzan 31, 95
可翁	Kaō 31
花押	Kaō 93
唐絵	Kara-e Part 1
烏丸光広	Karasumaru Mitsuhiro 51, 52
狩衣	Kariginu 91
歌仙絵	Kasen-e 20
加藤文麗	Katō Bunrei 81
景延	Kagenobu 99
勝川春潮	Katsukawa Shunchō 93
春章	Shunshō 93
桂離宮	Katsura Palace 45
葛飾北斎	Katsushika Hokusai 92
慶派	Kei School 7
啓孫	Keison 38
建長寺	Kenchōji 37, 39
建仁寺	Ken'ninji 28
黄瀬戸	Ki Seto 98
吉祥天	Kichijōten 6
吉山明兆	Kichizan Minchō (Chō Densu) 29
(兆殿司)	
木村孔恭 (菴葭堂)	Kimura Kōkyō (Kenkadō) 60, 67, 76
金閣寺	Kinkakuji 45
金竜山	Kinryūzan 93
切金	Kirikane 15, 17
喜多川歌麿	Kitagawa Utamaro 91, 95
北野天満宮	Kitano Shrine 22, 45
北野天神縁起絵巻	Kitano Tenjin Engi Emaki 22
北尾政演	Kitao Masanobu 93
重政	Shigemasa 93
清水寺	Kiyomizu-dera 45
高芙蓉	Kō Fuyō 67
来禽	Raikin 67
嵩谷	Sūkoku 89
幸阿弥	Kōami 103
公案	Kōan 30
小堀遠州	Kobori Enshū 99
光台院	Kōdai-in 14
高台寺	Kōdaiji 103
興福寺	Kōfukuji 5



香合  
康慶  
古今和歌集  
虚空藏  
駒井琦 (源琦)  
金剛峯寺  
光忍上人絵伝絵卷

金胎仏画帖  
小谷忠左衛門  
高桐院  
顧愷之  
廓庵  
黒棚  
釧雲泉  
久隅守景  
桑山玉洲  
九曜  
狂歌  
経塚

蘭亭  
雷峰  
李成  
嵩  
唐  
劉松年  
陸晃

馬和之  
麟  
遠  
町絵師  
巻菱湖  
蒔絵  
万福寺  
万寿寺  
末法  
円山応挙  
応瑞  
松尾芭蕉  
名所絵  
米芾  
三囲神社

Kōgō 102  
Kōkei 7  
Kokin Waka Shū 48, 68  
Kokūzō 45  
Komai Ki (Genki) 63  
Kongōbuji 10  
Kōnin Shōnin Eden Emaki  
24  
Kontai Butsuga Jō 14  
Kotani Chūzaemon 57  
Kōtō-in 81  
Ku K'ai-chih 41  
Kuo-an 30  
Kuro-dana 103  
Kushiro Unzen 81  
Kusumi Morikage 90  
Kuwayama Gyokushū 79  
Kuyō 47, 103  
Kyōka 92  
Kyōzuka 9

## L

Lan-t'ing 70  
Lei-feng 44  
Li Ch'eng 34  
Sung 44  
T'ang 81  
Liu Sung-nien 44, 70  
Lu Huang 70

## M

Ma Ho-chih 65  
Lin 44  
Yüan 40, 43, 44  
Machi-eshi 45-47  
Maki Ryōko 85  
Maki-e 102, 103  
Mampukuji 66  
Manjuji 27, 28  
Mappō 9  
Maruyama Ōkyō 62, 63, 67  
Ōzui 63  
Matsuo Bashō 74, 89, 90  
Meisho-e 45, 46  
Mi Fei 34, 82  
Mimeguri Shrine 92

耳塚  
皆川淇園  
美濃  
宮崎筠圃  
水指  
莫是竜  
黙庵  
文殊菩薩  
牧谿  
迎講  
村田珠光  
妙心寺

長崎派  
長沢芦雪  
名護屋城  
中林竹洞  
中山高陽  
南蛮  
南画  
南宗画  
南禅寺  
鳴海織部  
梨地  
根来寺  
涅槃  
念仏  
倪瓚  
二条城  
仁阿弥道八  
仁和寺  
西本願寺  
能阿弥  
能  
野々村仁清  
野呂介石  
貫名海屋

小田海僊  
尾形乾山  
光琳  
宗謙  
小川破笠  
扇屋

Mimi-zuka 45  
Minagawa Kien 69, 76  
Mino 98, 99  
Miyazaki Kimpo 66  
Mizusashi 97  
Mo Shih-lung Part 4  
Mokuan 31  
Monju Bosatsu 29  
Mu-ch'i 34, 38, 81  
Mukae-kō 15  
Murata Jukō Part 2  
Myōshinji 44, 62

## N

Nagasaki School 66, 79  
Nagasawa Rosetsu 62  
Nagoya Castle 99  
Nakabayashi Chikutō 86  
Nakayama Kōyō 76  
Namban 103  
Nanga 64-86  
Nanshūga Part 4  
Nanzenji 28, 35  
Narumi Oribe 99  
Nashiji 102, 103  
Negoro-dera 14, 101  
Nehan 17  
Nembutsu 15  
Ni Tsan 67, 73  
Nijō Castle 45  
Nin'ami Dōhachi 80  
Nin'naji 56  
Nishi Honganji 19  
Nōami Part 2  
Noh 91  
Nonomura Ninsei 56  
Noro Kaiseki 79  
Nukina Kaioku 28, 85

## O

Oda Kaisen 86  
Ogata Kenzan 56  
Kōrin 54, 55  
Sōken 54  
Ogawa Haritsu 90  
Ōgi-ya 51

小倉百人一首  
小栗宗湛  
笈  
花魁  
岡田米山人  
半江  
翁  
奥の細道  
奥田穎川  
奥村政信  
大門  
大岡春朴  
織部  
大阪城  
男山八幡

Ogura Hyakunin Isshu 49  
Oguri Sōtan 32  
Oi 100  
Oiran 93  
Okada Beisanjin 82  
Hankō 83  
Okina 91  
Oku no Hosomichi 74  
Okuda Eisen 80  
Okumura Masanobu 88  
Ōmon 92  
Ōoka Shunboku 60  
Oribe 99  
Osaka Castle 19  
Otoko-yama Hachiman 44

## P

伯牙

Pai Ya 43

## R

頼山陽  
来迎  
洛中洛外  
羅生門  
靈屋  
靈彩  
琳派  
六波羅  
良全  
竜華院  
竜光院

Rai San'yō 80, 81  
Raigō 3, 15  
Rakuchū-Rakugai 45  
Rashō-mon 2  
Reioku 103  
Reisai 31  
Rimpa 48-56  
Rokuhara 23  
Ryōzen 31  
Ryūge-in 28  
Ryūkō-in 27, 28

## S

寂  
西寺  
西明寺  
酒井抱一  
彭城百川  
桜井雪館  
三宝院  
三潭  
三条殿  
三十三間堂  
佐野(灰屋)紹益  
山東京伝  
京山

Sabi Part 2  
Saiji Part 1  
Saimyōji 3  
Sakai Hōitsu 54, 55  
Sakaki Hyakusen 65  
Sakurai Sekkan 79  
Sambō-in 7, 18  
San-t'ang 44  
Sanjō Palace 23  
Sanjūsangen-dō 45  
Sano (Haiya) Shōeki 48  
Santō Kyōden 89, 93  
Kyōzan 89

佐竹蓬平  
清談  
清光院一井  
清涼殿  
清滝権現  
石峰寺  
雪蹊寺  
赤脚子  
千利休  
少庵  
僊可  
浅草寺  
雪心等柏  
雪舟  
雪村  
瀬戸  
沈銓  
司馬江漢  
詩画軸  
信樂  
示現寺  
四条派  
式三番  
色紙  
神仏習合  
新古今和歌集  
新薬師寺  
真珠庵  
志野  
志野宗信  
思湛  
四天王寺  
仕手  
書棚  
瀟湘八景  
松花堂昭乗  
祥啓(啓書記)  
相国寺  
青蓮院  
青蓮院尊朝  
勝利寺  
周文  
修学院離宮  
修験道  
修験者  
秋月  
種字  
周耕  
皴  
春徳寺

Satake Hōhei 76  
Seidan 41  
Seikō-in Issei 68  
Seiryō-den 46  
Seiryū Gongen 18  
Sekihōji 60  
Sekkeiji 8  
Sekkyakushi 30  
Sen no Rikyū 97, 98  
Shōan 51  
Senka 39  
Sensōji 93  
Sesshin Tōhaku 33  
Sesshū 32, 34, 35  
Session 42-42  
Seto 98  
Shen Ch'üan 79  
Shiba Kōkan 76  
Shiga-jiku 32, 33, 39  
Shigaraki 97  
Shigenji 100  
Shijō School 63  
Shiki Samba 91  
Shikishi 48, 52  
Shimbutsu Shūgō 4, 18  
Shin Kokin Waka Shū 50  
Shin Yakushiji 5  
Shinju-an 34, 36, 61  
Shino 98  
Shino Sōshin 98  
Shitan 34  
Shiten'nōji 8  
Shite 91  
Sho-dana 103  
Shō-shō Hakkei 34  
Shōkadō Shōjō 44  
Shōkei (Keishoki) 37  
Shōkokuji 32, 35, 60  
Shōren-in 7  
Shōren-in Sonchō 48  
Shōriji 12  
Shūbun 32  
Shugaku-in Palace 48  
Shugendō 24, 100  
Shugenja 100  
Shūgetsu 44  
Shuji 14  
Shūkō 29  
Shun 31  
Shuntokuji 85

酬恩庵  
周徳  
周得  
宋紫石  
草堂寺  
草衣  
宗淵  
曾我蛇足  
    二直庵  
    蕭白  
僧形八幡  
宗雪  
草書  
宗達  
早雲寺  
蘇軾（東坡）

須恵器  
水墨画  
垂迹  
須賀川  
角倉素庵  
住吉物語絵卷

住吉定信  
住吉神社  
孫位  
宋迪  
鈴木春信

Shūon-an 34, 36  
Shūtoku 39  
Shūtoku 39  
Sō Shiseki 79  
Sōdōji 62  
Sōe 29  
Sōen 32, 35  
Soga Jasoku (Dasoku) 34, 61  
    Nichokuan 61  
    Shōhaku 61  
Sōgyō Hachiman 4  
Sōsetsu 51, 53  
Sōsho 62  
Sōtatsu 48-52  
Sōunji 40  
Su Shih (Tung-p'o) 34, 44,  
    64, 65  
Sueki 96  
Suiboku-ga 25-43  
Suijaku 4, 18  
Sukagawa 74  
Sumikura Soan 48, 51  
Sumiyoshi Monogatari Emaki  
    21  
Sumiyoshi Sadanobu 21  
Sumiyoshi Shrine 21, 98  
Sun Wei 64  
Sung Ti 34  
Suzuki Harunobu 95

## T

立原杏所  
誰袖  
待賢門  
太虚元寿  
戴逵  
高田敬甫  
託磨榮賀  
    為遠  
唐寅  
谷文晁  
    幹々  
    橘々  
    紅藍  
    秋香  
    舜瑛  
湛慶  
田能村竹田

Tachihara Kyōsho 69  
Tagasode 47  
Taiken-mon 23  
Taikyō Genju 26  
Tai K'uei 41  
Takada Keiho 61  
Takuma Eiga 29  
    Tametō 14  
T'ang Yin 67  
Tani Bunchō 81  
    Kankan 81  
    Kitsukitsu 81  
    Kōran 81  
    Shūkō 81  
    Shun'ei 81  
Tankei 8  
Tanomura Chikuden 84

短冊  
たらしこみ  
俵屋  
天目  
天台山  
天球院  
天竜寺  
天守閣  
鉄舟徳濟  
鉄翁祖門  
兜跋毘沙門天  
東大寺  
東福寺  
東寺  
等持寺  
鳥居清信  
    清信  
鳥山石燕  
土佐光元  
    光信  
    光則  
    光起  
    光吉  
    光芳  
    長隆  
唐招提寺  
東勝寺  
豊磨  
椿椿山  
月次絵  
連  
董其昌

打掛  
右恵愚溪  
上野城  
宇治橋  
憂世  
浮世絵  
雲潮  
雲居寺  
運慶  
雲谷等顔  
雲谷庵  
浦上玉堂  
    秋琴  
    春琴

Tanzaku 50  
Tarashikomi 48-53, 69  
Tawaraya 51-53  
Tem'moku 98  
Tendaizan 61  
Tenkyū-in 44  
Tenryūji 27, 33, 36, 61  
Tenshu-kaku 45  
Tesshū Tokusai 25, 27  
Tetsuō Somon 85  
Tobatsu Bishamonten 2  
Tōdaiji Part 1  
Tōfukuji 29-31, 45, 62  
Tōji 45  
Tōjiji 32  
Torii Kiyomasu 88  
    Kiyonobu 88  
Toriyama Sekien 91  
Tosa Mitsumoto 59  
    Mitsunobu 43, 45  
    Mitsunori 59  
    Mitsuoki 13, 59  
    Mitsuyoshi 59  
    Mitsuyoshi 68  
    Nagataka 21  
Tōshōdaiji 34  
Tōshōji 28  
Toyomaro 95  
Tsubaki Chinzan 81  
Tsukinami-e 45, 63  
Tsure 91  
Tung Ch'i-ch'ang Part 4

## U

Uchikake 95  
Ue Gukei 27, 38  
Ueno Castle 97  
Uji Bridge 46  
Ukiyo Part 4  
Ukiyo-e 87-95  
Unchō 93  
Ungōji 32  
Unkei 7, 8  
Unkoku Tōgan Part 3  
Unkoku-an 39  
Uragami Gyokudō 76, 77  
    Shūkin 76  
    Shunkin 78

歌川豊春  
豊広  
豊国  
宇津の山

Utagawa Toyoharu 94  
Toyohiro 94  
Toyokuni 94  
Utsu no Yama 52

## W

佗  
和歌  
王羲之  
晃  
和應  
渡辺玄対  
始興  
秀石  
文同  
武元直

Wabi Part 2  
Waka 19  
Wang Hsi-chih 70  
Mien 60  
Waō 89  
Watanabe Gentai 81  
Shikō 56  
Shūseki 66  
Wen T'ung 64  
Wu Yüan-chih 65

## Y

葉師寺

Yakushiji 17, 62

山田常嘉  
山本梅逸  
素軒  
倭絵（大和絵）  
柳沢淇園  
（柳里恭）  
楊補之  
八坂神社  
養源院  
養樹寺  
横瓶  
横井金谷  
横谷宗珉  
与謝蕪村  
寄木造り  
吉原  
玉潤

Yamada Jōga 89  
Yamamoto Baiitsu 86  
Soken 54  
Yamato-e Part 1  
Yanagisawa Kien  
（Ryū Rikyō）66  
Yang Pu-chih 36  
Yasaka Shrine 45  
Yōgen-in 51  
Yōjuji 53  
Yokobe(i) 96  
Yokoi Kinkoku 75  
Yokoya Sōmin 89  
Yosa Buson 73, 74  
Yosegi-zukuri 3  
Yoshiwara 88, 92, 93  
Yü-chien 34, 35

## Z

増上寺  
厨子棚

Zōjōji 16  
Zushi-dana 103



# Selected Bibliography

## GENERAL

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